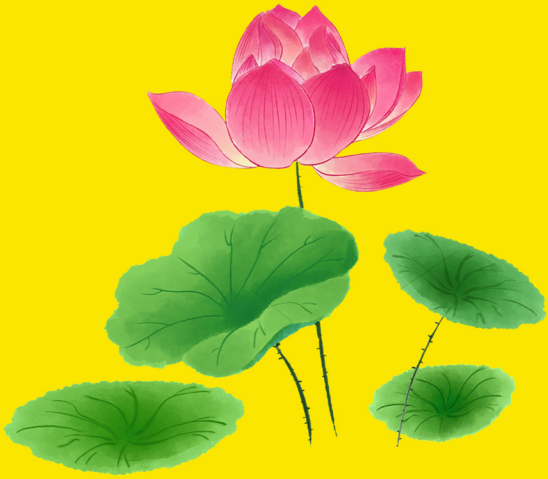
The Golden-Illumining Scripture (*Suvarṇaprabhā sottama-sūtra*)

金光明經



P. B. Tan

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I pay homage to the Perfectly Enlightened One,
the Buddha, the Tathāgata, World-Honoured One.

For all sentient beings
and
the guardians of this sūtra

Table of Contents

Prolegomenon vi
English translation of the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra 1
Chapter 1 : Preamble to the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-Sūtra 1
Chapter 2 : Lifespan of the Tathāgata 1
Chapter 3 : The Need for Penitence 3
Chapter 4 : Extolling the Tathāgatas 16
Chapter 5 : The Principle of Śūnyatā 21
Chapter 6 : The Four World-Guarding Celestial Monarchs 24
Chapter 7 : Sarasvatī Devatā 40
Chapter 8 : Lakṣmī Devatā 41
Chapter 9 : Dṛḍhapṛthivī Devatā 44
Chapter 10 : Saṃjñeya Chief Mahāyakṣa and Groups of Yakṣas 47
Chapter 11 : The True Teaching 50
Chapter 12 : Susaṃbhava Cakravartiraja 57
Chapter 13 : Protection by Devatās, Yakṣas, and other Amanuṣyas 61
Chapter 14 : Foretelling by the Buddha to the Ten Thousand Devas 68
Chapter 15 : Curing Illnesses 70
Chapter 16 : The Elder's son, Jalavāhana 75
Chapter 17 : Life-sacrifice 80
Chapter 18 : Praise to all the Buddhas 92
Chapter 19 : Entrustment Given by Śākyamuni Buddha 99
Chinese canonical text of the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra 101
Appendix I: Merits of Virtues of the Buddha and Mahā-bodhisattvas 142
Bibliography 154
About The Author 155

Prolegomenon

There were originally five versions of the Chinese translations of this discourse, with the different number of fascicles and dissimilar names. Currently, only three versions of these Chinese translations are extant. The earliest version known as <金光明經> containing 19 Chapters, was translated by bhikṣu Venerable Dharmakṣema (385~433) around 420 C.E. from a Sanskrit manuscript that is no longer extant. This earliest and extant Chinese translation version has now been translated into English by me, I guess probably being the first one to do so. It's important to mention that in the translation I have sometimes included text in parenthesis. This is for explaining the important and necessary words or phrases which are noticeably omitted or knowingly left out by the original translator as a result of the restriction of the inflexible four-characters verses, or sometimes due to the originally abridged passages with clearly inexplicit meanings or salient points wherein are not evidently reflected.

The second Chinese translation version <金光明帝王經>, containing 22 Chapters, was translated by bhikṣu Venerable Paramārtha (499~569 C.E.). The third Chinese translation version <金光明經更廣壽量大辯陀羅尼經> which contains 5 scrolls, was translated by bhikṣus Venerable Yaśogupta and Jñānagupta (523 to early 7th century C.E.). These two Chinese-translated versions are no long extant. The fourth Chinese translation version known as <合部金光明經> is still extant, which contains 24 Chapters, was translated by bhikṣu Venerable Bao-gui around 597 C.E. This fourth version was largely a combination from the works of the earlier third version and also four Chapters taken from the earlier version by Ven. Paramārtha. The fifth Chinese translation version <金光明最勝王經> is also extant, containing extensive 31 Chapters, was translated by bhikṣu Venerable Yi-jin (635~713) around 703 C.E. from a Sanskrit manuscript.

There are also three extant Tibetan translation versions of this discourse. The first two Tibetan versions were translated directly from the Sanskrit manuscripts. The third Tibetan version was translated from the Chinese translation version by bhikṣu Venerable Yi-jin. There are also the translation of this discourse into the East-Asian languages, including Sogdian, Uighur, and Tangut from the Chinese-translated version by bhikṣu Venerable Yi-jin. This version translated by bhikṣu Venerable Yi-jin is called Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtrendrarājaḥ-sūtra <金光明最勝王經>, and together with another two Mahāyāna sūtras, Karuṇikarājaḥ-rāṣṭrapāla-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra <仁王護國般若波羅蜜經> and Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra <妙法蓮華經>, are advocated by the Tien-Tai Sect of Chinese Buddhism as the three mahāvaipulya sūtras pertinent to nation-guarding and averting of catastrophes.

There have been other different titles given for this sūtra as Survaṇaprabhāsottama and Survaṇabhāsottama. The Sanskrit term *prabhāsa* is synonymous with *bhāsa* which means "illumination, brilliance", etc. The Sanskrit term *uttama* means "the most excellent, superlative, supreme, etc." *Survaṇa* means "gold or golden colour". Of these two titles, Survaṇaprabhāsottama is thought to be the earliest that was written in the Sanskrit manuscript of this discourse according to some prominent scholars.

A large part of this sūtra is addressed to Kings of the people, particularly in Chapter 4, 6, 11, and 12. According to the sūtra, if the Kings of humans comport themselves with dignified integrity in accord with the code of moral etiquettes as in line with this teaching, reign their kingdoms or nations in like manner, teach and educate their subjects by the same standard of virtues as they had for themselves and members of own families and kindreds, then as avowed by the many Gods and Chief divinities in this sūtra, they and their retinues of thousands of millions of milliards of countless deities will protect them, guard their regional territories, ensure that their kingdoms will prosper and, by and large, the masses will live happily and peacefully. This sūtra also mentions that Kings of the people have certain affiliations to and expectations from the celestial Gods, that accounts for the reason they are born to assume kingships in their specific lifetimes. This is also the reason why this scripture is particularly of interest to the human Kings.

In any forms of the spiritual practice or concerning the general sense of worship, a person's voluntary and outright confession of wrongfulness committed in one's own past actions through physical acts, speeches and thoughts is considered as imperative. Wherefore ? First of all, the penitential initiative represents a direct awareness of one's own evilness and foolishness that have been done, and the person who made the confession to himself, to the Almighty, or Gods, or to others, has revealed the desire for not wanting to repeat the same but is willing to discontinue them altogether. Secondly, the effort of corrective actions that would be put forth efficaciously tantamount to one's own remorsefulness and scruples, to the effect that the person who made the contrition looks forward to keep to moral conducts and wholesome practices to expiate the heap of one's own shameless guilts. In this respect, Chapter 3 deals with many different penitentiary means of practice which are clearly defined and can be very helpful to certain kinds of people.

Chapter 5 represents a brief distillation of the vital principle of the notion of *śūnyatā* or called the nature of insubstantiality in respect of all phenomena and things, either corporeal or formless, or literally rendered as "emptiness". Contents of this Chapter must be examined carefully and comprehend in its entirety to be in concurrence with the key principles mentioned in Chapter 4 and 18 which are concerned with honouring the Buddha-nature with praises to the perfectly enlightened Tathāgatas. The fundamental yet profound and abstruse principles of *śūnyatā* and *madhyamāpratipad* (the middle-way)

coexist and supplement each other, and the two are inseparably tied up with the peerless noble wisdom of Buddhas as reflecting in their constant, ultimate state of *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*.

Chapter 6 to 10 deal with queries given by the celstial Kings, Gods and Goddesses to the Buddha, including the four world-guiding celestial Monarchs, Sarasvatī devata, Lakṣmī devata, Dṛḍhapṛthivī devata, and Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa as chief general of the twenty-eight groups of the innumerable Yakṣas. The Buddha has given them very detailed and lengthy answers. These chief divinities along with their retinues of myriad deities including Yakṣas, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garuḍas, Kiṃnaras, and Mahoragas, as they proclaimed, would give their protection, every day and night without fail, to the human Kings, the adherents, and the commoners who regularly recite this sūtra and practise the core teachings of it. They are also obligated to guard the dharmabhāṇakas who explain this sūtra to others, diligently and untiringly, whether they are asleep or awake, and wherever they go. In Chapter 13, the Buddha addressed Lakṣmī devata with regard to the salient points and most profound meanings of this sūtra entirely in verses.

Chapter 14 to 17 are concerned with foretelling given by the Buddha, the altruistic deeds of a physician curing the illnesses of many others and caring for their ultimate wellbeing and happiness, and also an anecdote about making the life sacrifice to the tigress and her seven cubs in their dire starvation. The Buddha relates the details of these past anecdotes to Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree in these four chapters. These are some of the examples of the many tales of the past lives of Śākyamuni Buddha as explained in the canon of Jātakaṭṭhakathā. Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, in contents of Chapter 18, has given exceptional praise to the Buddha whilst indirectly emphasised about the attributes that explain the unsurpassed, perfect and supreme enlightenment of Buddhahood.

Something queer ensued as I continued in the translation of this sūtra which I like to share here. I have never experienced some rather uncanny events during those years whilst I was writing the scriptures of the Pāli Abhidhamma, and Mahāyāna Abhidharma and sūtras as in currently writing this Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra. During the times I was providing translations and explanations of this scriptural text from Chapter Five to Chapter Ten, I have had strange dreams one after another about five nights a week, and so many all those beings whom I saw in the dreams, I recognised none of them. Because the contents of these six Chapters deal with the four world-guiding celestial Monarchs, Gods of the celestial heavens, all those Chiefs of the divinities, and the myriad Yakṣas and other deities, and as I was providing the explication of this sūtra, being the dharma-bhāṇaka by definition, I guess these otherworldly beings have tried to make known to me the presence of their support in some way as they are obligated to do so according to what is repeatedly told in this sūtra. The most inexplicable yet quite a wonderful dream, happened on the

night I completed the Chapter on Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā. This divinity is the main reason why I am translating this sūtra. In contrast, when I was translating and explaining those other scriptures in the past, I seldom had dreams, but even then, those beings I saw in those dreams were mostly whom I knew personally but who have already passed away, including my dad, grandma, close relatives, several childhood friends and schoolmates of profound friendships, and also my ex-girlfriend Chan, of such great magnanimity. As these guarding divinities and their retinues have made their requests in this sūtra, longing for a little of the virtuous merits accumulated by the expounders and earnest readers of it to be dedicated to them, I happily did so as I mentioned them in the preceding page.

By the way, strangely on the night I have written this part of the foreword, again, I had a dream in which I was taught the two words called “briz” and “brizened”. These words are completely new to me. I found out that “briz” is an archaic word for “breeze”. I guess “they” were trying to relate to me that they felt brizened by the teaching of this sūtra and the merits that they received. Well, don’t be surprised that I may use this strange word “brizened’ regularly in my future translations wherever possible. What a brizy sensation ! This sūtra is unbelievable !

P. B. Tan
Kuching
Dec. 2024

These Buddha's teachings are profound,
wondrously subtle, and unsurpassed

are truly hard to come by in hundreds of thousands of
millions of myriads of aeons

As we have now seen and heard about it, we ought to
uphold it

May we fathom and comprehend the true meanings of
this Tathagata's teaching

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English translation of the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra

(from the Chinese translation by bhikṣu Venerable Dharmakṣema)

Chapter 1 : Preamble to the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-Sūtra

Thus I have heard, that once the Buddha was staying in Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa in the city of Rājagṛha. At that time, the Tathāgata (in his *samādhi*) was traversing in the unconfined, profound dharma-nature (*dharmatā*) within the locus of mental functioning of all those Buddhas, transcending the levels pf purity as cultivated by all those Bodhisattvas. This discourse as christened the "Golden Illumination", is pre-eminent amongst all the discourses. Should there be those who happen to listen to its contents, they would then be able to reflect those unmatchedly subtle and profound significations in it.

Such a sūtra over which has always been keeping guard and supported by the four Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones in the four directions, namely Akṣobhya Tathāgata in the east, Ratnaketu Tathāgata in the south, Amitāyus Tathāgata in the west, Dundubhisvara Tathāgata in the north.

I shall now elucidate regarding practice of the method of penance and so on, the acquired blessed merits as a result of which is paramount, and which forms the basis for capacitating the impairment of all those tribulations, the termination of those faulty karma-born resultants, as well as for the attainment of all-inclusive knowledge (*sarvākārajñatā*). It yields the adornment of one's boundless blessed merits of virtues. It thereupon eliminates all those sufferings and accords oneself an immense blissfulness.

For those whose senses are impaired, or whose life expectancy is curtailed and vitiated, or whose life is beset with poverty and hardships, or whom the devas and gods abandoned, or whom the siblings or close relatives are in disputes and litigation with, or who are downtrodden owing to enforcement of laws of the ruler, or who are often detested and remonstrated by many others, or whose wealth and belongings are fast on the decline, or who are stricken with worries, melancholy and dread, or who are bedevilled by the unpropitious constellations or visitations of the varied calamities and pestilences, or who are plagued by evil spirits and sorcery, or who are troubled by the continuing series of eerie phenomena, or those who often have nightmares during the night, while during the day often having anxiety and frets — they should take a clean shower, don the clean garments, and with the utmost faithfulness and

conscious purity, listen to this sūtra, paying special attention to profundity of the locus of mental functioning of all those Buddhas. By virtue of the numinous power of august virtues this sūtra, it can dispel completely all these evils, bringing forth *nirvāṇa* to these beings.

The world-guarding four Heavenly Monarchs, together with their respective generals and retinues, as well as those innumerable hordes of Yakṣas, would all come to guard those who recite and uphold this sūtra. Sarasvatī devatā, Nairañjanā devatā, Hāritī bhūta-mātā devatā, Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā, Lord Mahā-Brahma, the thirty-three celestial gods, the mighty Nāgarāja, Kiṃnararāja, Garuḍarāja, Asurarāja, along with all their respective retinues, will all come to guard and protect these beings, day and night without fail.

What I now going to set forth regarding the profoundly subtle underlying locus of mental functioning of all those Buddhas, is truly difficult to come by in hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of aeons. If there are those have heard about the contents of this discourse, or have explained it for others, or have simply rejoiced on such meritorious grounds, or have made offerings in honour of it, these beings would often be held in high regard by the eight categories of celestial beings [1] for myriads of aeons to come. Those who have begotten blessings by virtue of such practice, will later acquire the inconceivable collection of blessed merits, and too, will be protected and supported by all those Buddhas and those Bodhisatvas of the profound cultivation throughout the ten directions of space.

In this respect, such persons should clad in clean clothing, make offerings with the high-quality fine incense, with a mind of compassion (for all sentient beings), and regularly keeping with (the recitation and practice of this sūtra). They should be unsullied in their speeches, thoughts, and bodily actions, without all those moral impurities, and in whom gleefulness and contentment abound towards this sūtra.

If there are those have listened to the contents of this discourse, it must be known that they would acquire wholesomely human form (in the next life), to cultivate in the human realm, and to follow the right livelihood. As for others, apart from having listened to the contents of this discourse, who thereafter have become aware incontrovertibly of the essential for making their penitence, and hold fast to it in their mind, these are beings endued with the superior roots of wholesomeness, are whom the Buddhas extol.

[1] devatās, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kiṃnaras, and mahoragas.

Chapter 2 : Lifespan of the Tathāgata

At that time in the city of Rājagṛha, there was a great Bodhisattva by the name of Ruchiraketu, who in the past periods have upheld his reverence to the hundreds of thousands of millions of myriad Buddhas, whereby he planted all his roots of virtues. The great Bodhisattva Ruchiraketu had come to such a thought, 'What causes and conditions that are ascribed to Śākyamuni Tathāgata having the short measure of lifespan of merely eighty years ?' It further occurred to him thus, 'There are two reasons for acquiring long lifespan according to what the Buddha has said. Which two ? The first reason is by refraining oneself from taking the lives of sentient beings. The second reason is by making the generous offerings of food to the needy. But my teacher, the World-Honoured One, throughout the past hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of countless aeons, has been practising and keeping with the precepts of not taking the lives of sentient beings, has perfected himself with the ten kinds of virtuous deed. It is immeasurable inasmuch as all those foods and drink he had generously given away to the needy, up to the extent of filled up the hunger of those other sentient beings by offering them flesh, blood, bones and marrow of his own body, and even more so concerning those other (much delectable) food and drink that had been offered'.

Whilst this great being was thinking wholeheartedly about the Buddha and so deliberating about those meanings, his room all of a sudden became majestically wide and spacious by itself, with the celestial purplish lapis lazulis and various other jewels laid in mottle as the flooring, in which the room was becoming like pureland where the Tathāgata dwells. The room was permeated with such wonderful fragrance unmatched by those of the heavens, with haze of the perfume suffusing all over. In four directions of the room came out naturally four gorgeous thrones made of the four kinds of precious metals [2], and placed over which are the pure divine garments. On those respective thrones materialised large lotuses like those regularly used by the Buddhas, are embellished with the miscellaneous jewels. On top of the respective lotuses appeared the four Tathāgatas namely, Akṣobhya Tathāgata in the east, Ratnaketu Tathāgata in the south, Amitāyus Tathāgata in the west, Dundubhisvara Tathāgata in the north. These four Tathāgatas sit naturally on the lion-thrones. They radiated beams of bright light, shining over the city of Rājagṛha, sending forth to the three thousand times the great trichiliocosm of world systems, up to the extent of all those worlds of the Buddhas in the ten directions of space as numerous as there are the total grains of sand in the Ganges River. They also showered down the celestial blossoms, and contrived the celestial musical sounds.

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[2] Gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal (Sanskrit: *suvarna, rūpya, vaiḍūrya, sphaṭika*). *Cf.* Parinirvāṇa sūtra.

At that time, all those sentient beings in the three-thousandfold mega trichiliocosm of world systems, by means of the supernatural powers of these Buddhas, they relished the kind of happiness akin to that of the devas, and those who were deficient in their senses had been brought to complete normality. In short, the manifold unprecedented events of benefitting beings in the world, were all taking place.

At that time, Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva was rejoiced after seeing those Buddhas and all those truly rare happenings, and held his palms together towards those World-Honoured Ones, thinking wholeheartedly of the Buddhas and gave rise to a thought thus, 'Śākyamuni Tathāgata is blessed with the limitless merits of virtues, but it is just that I was confounded in regard to matter of life expectancy. Why is it that Śākyamuni Tathāgata has a lifespan of just eighty years ?'

At that time, the four Buddhas by their omniscience said to Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva, "Virtuous man ! You shouldn't presently ponder and weigh up concerning the brevity of lifespan of Śākyamuni Tathāgata. Wherefore ? Virtuous man ! We, the Buddhas have not as yet seen anyone amongst all those devas, humans, Māras, Brahmas, śramaṇas, brāhmaṇas, and non-human anthropoids, who is able to fathom and measure the lifespan of Śākyamuni Tathāgata and to know the farthest end of it, other than only the Tathāgatas."

So then the four Tathāgatas intended to make known the lifespan as accomplished by Śākyamuni Buddha, and by virtue of their wondrous supernormal powers, brought over to gather in Ruchiraketu Mahā-Bodhisattva's expanded room those beings inhabiting in realms of the sense-sphere and fine-material sphere, namely those Devatās, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garuḍas, Kiṃnaras, and Mahoragas, as well as the immeasurable number of great Bodhisattvas.

At that time, the four Buddhas in the midst of the assembly shed light briefly in analogical verses regarding the lifespan as accomplished by Śākyamuni Buddha:

> It is still countable of the drops of all those waters (here and everywhere), but it's just not possible to count lifespan of the Śākyamuni Buddha.
>
> It is still possible to measure the weights of all those Mount Sumerus, but lifespan of the Śākyamuni Buddha is just immeasurable.
>
> It is still possible to count the number of dust particles of all those great terras, but lifespan of the Śākyamuni Buddha is just uncountable.
>
> It is still possible to compute the limits of all those boundaries of

the deep space, but lifespan of the Śākyamuni Buddha is just incomputable.

As in there are such incalculable hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of kalpas, the same is true of the lifespans of Buddhas, are just limitless.

It is for this reason, thereby the twofold condition is spelt out, namely abstinence from harming life of sentient beings, and regularly carry out plentiful offerings of food to the poor and needy.

Thus, it should be known that the extent of lifespan of this great being is really immeasurable, for it is boundless, nor also has it any limit.

And therefore, you now shouldn't again evoke your befuddlement in regard to the illimitability of lifespan of the Buddha.

At that time, upon hearing the explanations by the four Buddhas concerning the illimitability of lifespan of the Tathāgata, the great Bodhisattva Ruchiraketu was rejoiced as he has understood it profoundly with faith. Whilst this subject on lifespan of the Tathāgata was being explained, myriads of sentient beings (therein) have set their mind on realising the ultimate state of *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi* [3]. At that time, the four Tathāgatas (and the rest) vanished all of a sudden without a trace.

Chapter 3 : The Need for Penitence

So then at night, Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva dreamt of a sizable golden drum, which radiated light everywhere just like the sunbeam. He then saw in the resplendent light those myriad Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones in the ten directions of space, sitting on seats created of lapis lazuli under those jewelled trees, surrounded by the myriad retinues, to whom the Buddhas provide discourses. He saw one person, who seems like a Brahmin, beating the drum loudly, and in those drumbeats were brought forth the verses concerning undertaking penitence.

At that time, Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva woke up from his dream, heartily recollected and thought about the penitential verses he has heard from the dream, and continued doing so until dawn, then he left the city of Rājagṛha. There were then numerous thousands of other beings who followed Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva to the dwelling place of Śākyamuni Buddha in

[3] Generally rendered as "the unsurpassed supreme enlightenment". For good reasons, the Sanskrit term *anuttarasamyak-saṃbodhi* is best left without translation.

Vulture Peak. After he arrived at the place of the Buddha, he prostrated his heads reverently at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated in a clockwise direction three times around the Buddha to the right, and then sat down on one side, held his palms together in respect whilst looking in adoration of the honourable countenance of the Buddha, without taking his eyes off it for a moment, and then related to the Buddha about the golden drum that he saw and the penitential verses that he heard in his dream :

> I heartily recalled my dream last night, wherein I saw a large golden drum with wonderful colours and was radiating effulgently. Its beam of light was wide and intense, so bright that it exceeds the sun's ray, illuminating universally all those world systems throughout the ten directions of space as numerous as there are the total of sand-grains in the Ganges River.
>
> Because of its brilliance, I was able to see all those Buddhas who were sitting on seats made of lapis lazuli, placed under the jewelled trees, and they were surrounded by the myriad retinues, to whom they provided discourses. I then saw someone who seems like a Brahmin, beating the drum, and in those drumbeats issued forth these verses :
>
> The wonderful sound coming from this large golden drum [4] is capable of eliminating those sufferings in the three time periods; those sufferings in the woeful realms of hells, ghosts and creatures; poverty and privation, and all those other sufferings.
>
> The wondrous, delicate sound coming from this large drum is capable of dispelling all those stifling distresses of sentient beings, eliminating the fears within many others so that they can be free of trepidation, in a way like those Buddhas who are accomplished with fearlessness. [5]
>
> The merits of virrtues as realised by those Buddhas and other sages, have brought them ashore with their great wisdom, who are far beyond the cycle of life and death. Likewise, the merits of virtues to be acquired by beings consequent to their fruitful meditational dhyānas and auxiliary means of practices, the magnitude of that can be compared to that of the ocean.
>
> This wondrous resonance coming from the large drum, enables beings to be fit up with those noble instructions [6] of the profound and far-reaching (effects). Those instructions will enable them to

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[4] The description of golden drum is an analogy to the Buddha's dharma-wheel turning.

[5] Fourfold distinctive fearlessness of the Buddha (*catvāri-vaiśāradyāni*).

[6] Sanskrit: *brahma-ruta* (梵音), literally as the brahmanic sounds, or brahma's voice.

realise the unsurpassed sublime fruition of enlightenment of the Buddhahood; will enable them to turn the peerless wheels of dharma of such wondrously pure and subtle nature; will enable them to dwell with the lifespan of inconceivably limitless aeons; will enable them to preach the true teachings for the benefits and welfare of sentient beings; will enable them to work against the defilement of tribulations and vexations in eliminating all those sufferings; craving, aversion, delusion, and so forth, all of these would be put to *nirvāṇa*.

If there were beings who find themselves in hells, were set alight with the blazing fire, burning their bodies, and suppose that they also heard instructive words of the wonderful *brahma-ruta* of golden drum, they should seek veneration to the Buddha forthwith.

(The sublime fruition of which) will also allow them to acquire knowledge of numerous prior lifetimes, and capacitates them connaturally with the right mind and thinking in relation to the Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones, as well as to be able to come across and hear about the wonderful, subtle and unparalleled teaching of the Buddha.

The wondrous resonance coming from the golden drum, will also enable beings to be able to meet with the Buddhas of their times, by virtue of which would allow them to be unfettered from all evil karma and so on, and also be able to correctly practise the numerous white-immaculate nature of deeds.

In regard to all those devas, humans, and the rest other beings, the wondrous resonance coming from this golden drum that they have heard, would help them to bring forth their complete fulfillments in due course according to the nature of their thoughts and supplications.

If there were sentient beings who have descended into the mega purgatories, whose bodies were constantly burnt by the blazing fire, and having no one whosoever coming to their deliverance, and they thereby will (continue sequentially for long periods in the three woeful realms to) transmigrate in those woes. (The wonderful *brahma-ruta*) would exterminate all those sufferings of these sentient beings.

If there were sentient beings who are pressed by all those sufferings, either in undergoing their retributions in the three woeful realms or amongst humans, by virtue of the wondrous *brahma-ruta* from this golden drum which they come to hear of,

all their sufferings would be dispelled. These sentient beings, having no one to depend on nor is there anyone with whom they can take shelter, I (the Buddha) can be their refuge.

All those World-Honoured Ones should presently testify that they have long called forth their great compassion towards me (and all the rest), in that all those Buddhas throughout the ten directions of space are indeed omnipresent. Before Hero of the present world [7], the most honoured One amongst two-legged beings, I now confess in contrition of all the faulty evil deeds that I have done.

Before the ten powers of all those Buddhas, yet I do not recognise any of those Buddhas, nor also appreciating the loving-kindness and hardship of my parents. As I do not apprehend what wholesome ways are, so that I have done all kinds of faulty acts.

Being self-assured of my own special lineage and the accumulation of material wealth thereof, so that I have led dissipated living in the prime of my life, and thus carried out all those wicked acts.

Being unwholesome in thoughts, and so keep on carrying out the faulty verbal actions. These erroneous acts are done by following intention of the mind, and yet still not realising such fault.

The fatuous deeds of ordinary beings are consequent to themselves for being shrouded in the dark by their own ignorance, or through regularly mingling with bad friends, so that they are often beset by fretfulness. The main reason being the five sense-based desires [8], on account of which they give rise to malaise and dislikes, remaining as insatiable, is thus they carry out all those faulty acts.

By mixing with the unenlightened ones of ignoble characters, is why it engenders in oneself avarice, jealousy and envy. By reason of poverty and dearth, one resorts to duplicity and flattery, committing the evil acts.

By reason of subjection (to the various factors of dependent conditions), is the reason why it always brings about one's apprehensions, unable to acquire natural easiness, and hence one performs all those erroneous acts.

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[7] Sanskrit: *loka-vināyaka* (世雄), is another epithet of the Buddha.

[8] Attachment to the objects of forms, sound, odour, taste, touch.

By reason of the desires of greed, anger, and delusion which agitate the mind, and being oppressed by yearning, is therefore one performs all those erroneous acts.

By reason of coveting nice clothing, appetizing food, and feminine attraction, and being oppressed by the heat of own fretfulness, is therefore one performs all those erroneous acts.

The accumulation of my three groups of karmic obstructions, these have been effected by misdeeds through bodily actions, speeches, and thoughts. I now repent it all.

Or there may have been my irreverence in some way to the Buddhas, their teachings, and the monastic saṅghas, and to all such misdeeds, I now repent in full.

Or there may have been my disrespect in some way to the sages of Pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas, and to all such misdeeds, I now repent in full.

Due to my lack of wisdom so that I may have in some way vilified true teachings of the Buddhas, or inadvertently not paying due respect to parents and the elders. To all such misdeeds, I now repent in full.

Being cloaked by the delusion of ignorance, so that I have been giving myself up to conceitedness and dissoluteness, and because of craving, anger, and delusion that I have carried out all those wrongful things. To all such misdeeds, I now repent it all.

I henceforward would practise making offerings to the myriad Buddhas in the three-thousandfold mega trichiliocosm of world systems. I would vow to liberate the myriad sentient beings in the ten directions of space from all their sufferings (in congruence with accomplishment of the unsurpassed, supreme and perfect enlightenment of Buddhahood).

I henceforward would settle down to dwell resolutely in (the path of Buddhayāna), to guide all those beings throughout the unimaginable countless aeons [9], to dwell in the ten holy stages of cultivation. To those who have accomplished themselves in abiding in the ten holy stages, I would guide them to perfection in the supreme enlightenment of Tathāgatahood.

For the sake of all sentient beings, I would undertake noble practices through the milliards of aeons to come, in order to

[9] Sanskrit: kalpāsaṃkhyeya (阿僧祇劫).

liberate the myriad beings from the deep of sufferings. I would also elucidate to all those various beings the profound and wonderful penitentiary method of practice.

The so-called golden-illumining discourse (in which contains the penitentiary method of practice, and to those who have observed and have been keeping with it), all those much heavier karmic obstructions which they have generated for themselves in the past several thousands of aeons, would be obliterated.

If some of them, to such a point of having wholeheartedly confessed in contrition merely just once, many of their sins would also be brought to extinction though.

The Buddhas by now have illuminated on the penitentiary method of practice, a salient point of the purifying and wondrously subtle golden-illumining discourse, which can quickly eliminate all those karmic obstructions of beings.

I should easefully dwell fixed in the ten holy stages of cultivation, the tenfold ground of treasures [10] as my footing, to accomplish the unsurpassed brilliant merits of virtues of Buddhahood, so that I would be able to carry all those sentient beings across the deep of the three spheres of existence.

The truly profound *dharmākara* [11] of all Buddhas, inherent in which are the unimaginable boundless virtuous merits and omniscience (*sarvākārajñatā*), and I vow to be complete with it.

The hundreds of thousands of meditative samādhis, the five spiritual faculties, the five spiritual powers, the seven factors of awakening, the noble eightfold Path, the incredible dhāraṇis, the ten powers of the Tathāgata — I must accomplish them all.

May all those greatly compassionate Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones testify this nonetheless slender faith of mine, be pitiful of me and accept my penitence. If there had been those evil wrongdoings committed by me in the last tens or so aeons, as a result of which I have been plagued with griefs and sufferings, poverty and dearths, fiery distresses and dreads, fearing karmic obstructions may bechance me and thereby I always become

[10] The tenfold ground of treasures denotes the Bodhisattva's ten stages of cultivation as well as the strivings for perfecting the ten pāramitās of practice.

[11] Sanskrit: *dharmākara* (法藏), also known as *dharmakośa* or *dharmagarbha*, is identical in signification to the term *Tathāgatagarbha* (如來藏), the primal source of taintless, inconceivably wondrous repository of Buddhahood.

timorous and bereft of joy and happiness wherever I go — the present greatly compassionate World-Honoured Ones in the ten directions of space who are able to dispel all those fears of sentient beings, may thou accept my earnest repentance, so that all my phobia can be obliterated.

All those karmic defilements of afflictions of mine, I only wish that those World-Honoured Ones will cleanse off me with their miraculous drops of great compassion, so that I could be purified. To all my past wrongdoings, I now repent it all. The misdeeds that are done presently, I earnestly confess it all. Misdeeds which have not been done as of yet, I dare not again commit. Delinquencies which I have either knowingly or inadvertently performed, I dare not conceal.

What I have committed in the three kinds of bodily misdeeds, the four kinds of verbal misdeeds, and the three kinds of mental misdeeds [12], I now repent it all. Amongst these ten kinds of wrongdoing I have done through my bodily actions, speeches and thoughts, I express my utter contrition without reservation.

I firmly bent on keeping far away from these ten kinds of evil deeds, and to practise the opposite of them, viz. the ten kinds of virtues, to abide peacefully in the ten stages of cultivation, to come up to the honourable tenfold power of Buddhahood. Nonetheless, I heretofore should bear the excruciating retribution for all those evil deeds that I have ever done, and now before the Buddhas, I earnestly repent it all.

If there had been those deeds of virtues that I have ever done, whether on this motherland or in those other worlds, I would like to dedicate (all those collections of my merits to all sentient beings on the course of *saṃsāra*). The requisites as effected through my meritorious deeds performed bodily, verbally and mentally, accomplishment in the unsurpassed path of enlightenment, may I bear testimony to it in one of my future lives.

If I had been through those six destines [13] that abound in dangers and troubles, and had committed all those sins on grounds of my folly and benightedness, and now before the Buddhas, I earnestly repent it all.

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[12] Respectively, they are: (a) killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct, (b) bad-mouthing, fomenting discord, lying, and frivolous chit-chatting; (c) greed, aversion, and delusion.

[13] The six destines of existence : naraka-gati, preta-gati; tiryagyoni-gati, asura-gati, manuṣya-gati, deva-gati.

The mundane nature of all those insecurities and troubles pertaining to matters of life and death, all sorts of desires and lust, all sorts of delusory fretfulness — the troubles as vexations and afflictions apropos of which I have ever gone through, I now repent it all.

The afflictions about frivolity and impetuosity of mind, the afflictions about associating with bad companions, the afflictions about transmigrating amongst the three spheres of existence, the afflictions about the threefold venom [14], the afflictions about handling extreme difficulties, the afflictions about not meeting good opportunities, the afflictions about not needful of cultivating merits of virtues, the afflictions about unneedful of seeing a Buddha or listening to Buddha's teaching — any of such afflictions ever committed, I now repent it all.

All those Buddhas are whom I and all others rest upon, is thus I now make obeisance to the Buddhas as abounding with the briny deep (of *dharmatā* and wisdom) [15]. I contemplate it as glittering golden illumination akin to that of Mount Sumeru, is thus I bow in deference to the Supreme Ones.

The corporeal appearance (of Śākyamuni Buddha) is like the natural pure gold; his eyes are pure as the deep purplish lapis; his awe-inspiring merits of virtues is starkly prominent, as is his unmistakable appellation.

The effulgence of wisdom [16] of the great compassionate Buddhas can dispel the cloak of darkness (of all delusions of beings, so that they can) be purified to be rid of moral impurities through the wholesome means, to be liberated from their fixations with the delusory objects which are likened to optical illusions.

In the light of unmatched brilliance of wisdom of those Buddhas which illumine brightly everywhere, all those blazing vexations and afflictions that scorch the minds of beings, only the Buddhas are able to extinguish them all so that mind-body of beings would become fresh and cool, like the moonlight.

The thirty-two major hallmarks and the eighty minor signs on physical body of the Buddha, are the exquisite bodily adornments which living beings have always looked upon them without ever getting weary of.

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[14] craving, aversion, and delusion.

[15] 法性智海

[16] In Sanskrit, *jñāna-divākara* (慧日、慧光、慧照等) of the Buddhas.

The majestic merits of virtues of the Buddhas are like an effulgent web, splendid and dazzling, under which the three spheres of existence are stabilised, bearing resemblance to the sun that illuminates the world.

Wonderful forms [17] of the Buddhas are colossal, are varied and distinct, are pure and immaculate, likening to the lapis. Colours of their bodies are multifarious, which can be crimson, like at dawn, or it can be silvery, like radiance of the web that is ornamented by the crystals [18] , and so on, and all of which are adornments of the Buddha's *jñāna-divākara*.

Beings in the three spheres of existence who remain adrift in the saṃsāric deeps, are comparable to those whose mind and body are plagued by the turbulent flooding water after heavy downpour, and the water of which is tasted bitter and toxic, is grossly debilitating. In this respect, the Tathāgata's effulgent web of *jñāna-divākara* would work wonders to dry up the water.

The wonderful bodies [19] of the Tathāgata, of the most excellent and special forms, emitting the golden brilliance which illuminates all (those needful sentient beings). Their deeps of superknowledge and wisdom, suffuse all over the three spheres of existence. Because of this, I now make obeisance in honour of the Buddhas.

Just as the volume of water in the briny which is utterly difficult to be ascertained, the amount of dust-motes on the great terra which is incalculable, the magnitude of weight and dimensions of all those Mount Sumerus which are surely hard to be measured, farthest bounds of the cosmic space too are not possible to be known, and the same is also true of the collections of the merits of virtues of all those Buddhas, which are boundless. The possessing states of mind of all those beings, in no way would that be capaable of knowing it, and even if they could exhaust all their efforts to reflect upon it for numerous aeons, they would not be able to know about extent of the boundless merits of virtues of the Buddhas.

It is still possible to measure extent of the magnitudes of the great terra and all those mountains, and also it is still possible to measure the amount of hair-tip droplets of all the water in the

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[17] Sanskrit: *surūpa* (妙色), is referring to *nirmāṇakāya*, like the Śākyamuni Buddha.

[18] Sanskrit: *sphaṭika* (頗梨).

[19] Sanskrit: *dharmakāya*, *saṃbhogakāya*, and *nirmāṇakāya* of the Tathāgata.

oceans, but it is not possible to fathom and ascertain the boundless merits of virtues of the Buddhas. [20]

The splendour of those excellent primary and minor marks (of the Śākyamuni Buddha), as well as sheer appellation (of the Śākyamuni Buddha), merely the recitation of them by beings would bring forth their blessed merits.

I (Śākyamuni), by means of all those virtuous deeds I have performed, attained ultimate enlightenment in the path of Buddhahood not long after coming into this world, and thenceforth went about delivering wondrous instructions for the benefit and welfare of all beings, for emancipating them from the numerous sufferings.

I was able to subdue all those demons and their retinues, and thereafter turning the wheel of unmatched puritanical teachings. My (saṃbhogakāya) [21] lives the lifespan of inconceivable myriad aeons. The taste of nectar of our instructions shall fully satisfy all those sentient beings.

I would be complete in perfection of the six pāramitās, just as what all those Buddhas of the past have accomplished, in that all those afflictions shall be dispelled, all those sufferings shall be eliminated, and those passionate desires of greed, aversion, delusion, and so on shall all be exterminated.

I would recollect events of my prior hundreds or thousands or millions or milliards of former lifetimes, and in doing so I would be always in earnest and rightly mindful of the wonderful, subtle and unparalleled true teachings that are taught by those Buddhas.

I (Śākyamuni), because of all those virtuous deeds that I have performed, I had been able to meet many Buddhas in my prior lifetimes, so that through their guidance I was able to disencumber myself from all those wrongdoings, and always practised deeds of virtues.

All those sentient beings in the world who are troubled by the myriad distresses and anguishes, I would guide and assist for their extinguishment. If there are beings whose senses are impaired or incomplete (and who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I would in due time render them complete.

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[20] Because the minds are bound by dependent conditionality of the five aggregates.

[21] It refers to the reward-form of Vairocana Buddha in the Sahā world.

To those beings in the ten directions of world systems who are stricken with diseases and sufferings, who are frail and soon after in privation, having no one coming to their aid, (and who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I would emancipate them from all such sufferings, to still regain their vitality and strength, and to recover to the fine states they initially had.

If there are beings who have violated rules governed by the king, who are going to be executed, are hence filled with immense terror, worries and distresses, such beings (who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions, and through my supernormal power), I would let them be spared and be liberated.

If there are beings who are bound by fetters, are being whipped, whose body are oppressed by the various tortures, and whose minds are troubled by the numerous distresses, fears, and terrors, (and who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I vow to liberate them all from such numerous anguishes.

If there are beings who have to consistently endure hunger and thirst, (and who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I would render them to be provided with palatable food and drink. In like manner, I would render those blind to regain their sight, those deaf to regain their hearing, those mute to regain their talking, those naked to be provided with clothing, those poor to be met with wealth full in stores and will never again run short of money. In short, all those in anguish would again find peace and happiness, to the extent of no one would be plagued by all such distresses.

Living beings (who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I would render them to be always in genial countenance when they meet one another; to be in strict propriety by appearance and whom others are always pleased to look at. Also to render them to always think about others and assist them voluntarily with wholesome deeds (rather than being egocentric and selfish). As a result, they would eventually be replete with virtuous merits, and their bellies will always be filled satisfactorily with nice foods and drinks.

Living beings (who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), I would accord them the chances to relish the varied musical sounds, such as the musical productions with harp, zither, flute, the larger zither, drum, trumpet, and the like wonderful sounds of many other musical instruments, according

to exactly their passions. In the same way as they wish for, there will be the golden lotuses and the rare utpala blossoms everywhere on the rivers, ponds, and wellstrands of spring.

According to what they yearn for, I would render them to be in possession of the various nice garments, foods and drinks, treasures and wealth, gold, silver and lapis lazuli, genuine pearls and the best-quality jades, as well as an assorted mix of precious stones.

May those living beings hear nothing of the evil nature, to the extent of seeing utterly no evils. May all those living beings be blessed with wonderful complexions and appearances, and get on well with each other, cherish and care for one another. I would render them to be in possession of the required means of livelihood in this world, according to their aspirations.

May those living beings, according to what they supplicate, be fulfilled in response to their true necessities. Often in three parts of the day [22], the gandhavṛkṣa [23] will scatter down fragrant powdered incense and perfume, and those living beings who get it with their bodies will be filled with joy and happiness.

May living beings always make venerated offerings to all those incredible Buddhas in the ten directions of space, and also to their pure and immaculate, peerless and wonderful teachings, as well as to those Bodhisattvas and the communities of Śrāvakas.

May living beings always be dissociated from the three woes and the eightfold difficulty [24], and always be born in places without these woes and difficulties, and be able to meet and venerate those Buddhas, the unsurpassed masters.

May living beings always be born in the respectable homes, having the plenteous wealth, be furnished with stability and profuse happiness in life. Also, to be endowed with the excellent, wonderful complexions and appearances, and to accomplish themselves with utter blessed merits and be christened with the great appellations.

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[22] morning, afternoon, and evening.

[23] It generally refers to the sandalwood, aloewood, garuwood trees with fragrance.

[24] The three woes are the destines of hells, ghosts, creatures. The eightfold difficulty are places of the aforesaid three woes (3), the ever-pleasant life in Uttarakuru (1), long-life in the form and formless realms of existence (1), to be born as blind or deaf or mute (1), being prominent with the mundane eloquence and worldly wisdom (1), being born in the period without a Buddha (1).

May those women (discontented of themselves), to be born as males in the subsequent lives as they wish for, be abound with wisdom, and to undertake spiritual practices assiduously and unrelentingly. They therein should perform all good deeds so as to be consistent with the Path of Bodhisattva's cultivation, and endeavour to perfect their practices of the sixfold pāramitā.

Thereby during dhyānas (as in testimony to their awakening), they will always catch sight of the numerous Buddhas in the ten directions of space, sitting under the jewelled trees, on seats made of lapis lazuli, dwelling peacefully in samādhis, naturally and blissfully through their supernormal efforts, they deliver true instructions, which many others are always delighted to hear.

If during my present life and previous lives, I had committed the evil wrongdoings, which consequently drawn forth imperilments and hardships to me, and for which I deserve to be given due evil resultants, (I herein repent in earnest and would duly follow the Buddha's instructions), and wish that all those uncongenial sequels of effects be eliminated off me without a remainder.

If all those living beings are entangled by the closely and firmly woven net of cyclical birth and death, are thus bound by the three spheres of existence, (and who in earnest repent and duly follow the Buddha's instructions), may their nets of karmic obstructions be sheared off, obliterating themselves of all fretfulness and anguishes, and to quickly attest to the supreme enlightenment.

If in Jambudvīpa [25] and in all those other places of the myriad worlds, there are beings who have performed the various wholesome deeds and brought forth their marvellous and exceptional merits of virtues, from the bottom of my heart, I likewise follow their rejoice.

From this time on, my blessed merits realised through such spontaneous rejoicing and accord with the meritorious deeds of others, as well as all those other wholesome deeds that were performed through my bodily actions, speeches and thoughts, I wish that in light of which I would be able to accomplish myself in the Path of *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi* in one of the future lives, to realise the propitious and absolutely pure resultant fruition.

If there are beings who pay obeisance to the Buddhas, and eulogise the ten sublime powers of the Tathāgata, in utter faith and purity of the mind, without being further enmeshed by all

[25] Jambudvīpa （閻浮提，即南贍部洲）

those scepticisms, and are also able to practise the methods of penitence as instructed by the Buddhas, these beings would vanquish sixty great kalpas of going through otherwise sinned destinies.

If there are virtuous men, virtuous women, officials of kṣatriya caste, kings, brahmins, and others who can hold their palms together in respect before the Buddha [26], and glorify (the inconceivable merits and powers of) the Tathāgata, and furthermore, understand and commend the meanings of these verses concerning penitence, then wherever they are in their subsequent lives, they will always remember events of their past lives; be born with no deficiency of the senses; are morally pure; will carry themselves naturally in strict propriety; and able to amass considerable blessed merits through carrying out myriad different wholesome deeds, and quickly attain enlightenment.

Furthermore, wherever they may be in the subsequent lives, they will always be honoured or respected by the Kings or the Prime Ministers of states. Such persons really have not cultivated their roots of virtues under just one Buddha, or five Buddhas, nor ten or so Buddhas, that they are able to hear about (or personally go through and understand this discourse, and thus practise) the methods of penitence. But rather, these living beings have planted their roots of virtues under the teachings of myriad milliards of Buddhas, the Tathāgatas, that they can come to hear about this discourse, understand and practise penitence.

Chapter 4 : Extolling the Tathāgatas

At that time, the Buddha told Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā, "Virtuous divinity ! There was a King in a bygone period by the name of Suvarṇabhujendra, who often exalted (the great virtues of others). He honourably extolled all those Buddhas of the past, present, and future ages thus :

"At present, to all those Buddhas of the past, present, and future ages throughout the ten directions of space, I hold them in high regard, and show my reverence and extolment for them.

Those Buddhas are absolutely purified, manifest in their most subtle, wondrous *nirvāṇa* [27], the best of all forms of corporeality [28], shining

[26] Because Śākyamuni Buddha has left our world, we thus pay our reverence in *namaste* before the Buddha's image, or merely by reciting his name in faith. He knows it !

[27] The term「微妙寂滅」refers to state of *parinirvāṇa* of the Tathāgata's *dharmakāya*.

[28] The term「色中上色」refers to the marvellous thirty-two major hallmarks and the eighty minor marks of the Buddha's *nirmāṇakāya*.

with the golden radiance. Their voices are the best amongst all voices, likened to that of Brahman whose voice reverberates afar resembling the thunderclap. Their hairs are dark purplish jet-black, curly and radiant, look also like the peacock's colourful plumes of verdure with bees flitting around. The gaily pattern of colours of their hairs is just indescribable.

Their teeth are pure white resembling the snow-white jade, which bring into prominence their golden radiating countenances, in clear distinction between the two. Their eyes are broad and long, pure and immaculate, resembling a pair of *utpala* lotuses, blossom and reflect strikingly on water. Their tongues are broad and long, with a reddish-radiance appearance which shine brilliantly, like the nascent blossoms.

Their radiance-emitting curl of hairs (*urṇākeśa*) between the eyebrows, are white as the snow-white jade and clear as the moon, and which lustrously swirls to the right, resembling the pure lapis. Their eye-brows are slender, likening to the slim willow leaves; the appearance resembles the rising moon; the colour of which is shiny black, much lustrous than that of the queen bee.

Their noses are rather round and straight high, likening to the cast gold ingots, but are fine and soft, proper to the visage. The succeeding extraordinary hallmarks of the Tathāgatas are the most outstanding, and in this respect, they have incomparably the perfect sense of taste of all things. All their body-hairs are grown bluish-black, soft and fine, curling at the end to the right, pretty like the peacock’s neck.

Right after those Tathāgatas are born into the worlds, their bodies would radiate great light [29], illumine the numerous world systems in the ten directions of space, allay and dispel the sufferings of all those sentient beings in the three woeful realms of existence, so that they all will eventually live through happiness [30]. Those hell beings, creatures, ghosts, humans, deities, and others who are illumined by radiance of the Tathāgatas, will experience peacefulness and be free from adversities, as well as be able to dispel their sundry many vile propensities.

Those Tathāgatas similarly have ultra-fine complexion, like the tinge of refined gold. They all have pure immaculate visages, likening to the full-moon. Their bodies are radiating brilliantly, just like the rising sun.

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[29] Such isn’t the light that is visible to our naked eyes. Just like light-orbs, which can have the different colours and shapes, are only visible through camera or other instruments.

[30] Only when those distressed sentient beings have come to end of their repeated rebirths amongst those woeful realms, thereafter born as humans, they would then meet with the opportunities to practise virtues, dispelling altogether their afflictions and sufferings.

Their gaits and deportments are in a way comparable to that of a lion. When they dangle their long arms by the sides, they go beyond their knees, and (their arm-swings) looks like the branches of sāla tree that are swung by the wind.

The extent of the completeness of Tathāgatas' effulgence can illumine the illimitable distance, in a way like the assemblage of hundreds of thousands of the suns and moons will so do. Bodies of the Tathāgatas are wondrously pure, free from all impurities, and the brilliance they emitted reaches everywhere to all those Budhakṣetras. Brilliance of the Tathāgata is majestic, so bright as like the effulgent flame, can enshroud the myriad suns and moons. Brilliance of the Tathāgatas, in a way as comparable to the pharos, illuminates the boundless worlds, whereby all those sentient beings (in the dark) will look for source of the light and behold the Buddhas.

The Buddhas fundamentally practice tens of thousands numerous virtuous deeds, and on grounds of their collections of merits of virtues that they consummated their marvellous bodies of majesticness, and who are being revered and adored earnestly by most beings. In this respect, they have the immaculate soft hands and feet, as well as slender and smooth arms, resembling the trunk of Gajapati [31] .

There are as numerous Buddhas of the past and future kalpas as there are the dust-motes, and the same is also true of Buddhas in the present kapla (in those worlds). To all these Buddhas, I pay my utmost reverence. With purity in ny body, speech, and also in thought, I offer the fine fragrant incense and flowers, I sing in praise of the innumerable merits of virtues of all those Buddhas. Even if I could eulogise the collections of merits of virtues of all those Buddhas with a hundred tongues throughout myriad thousands of aeons, it still will not end.

The collections of merits of virtues of those Tathāgatas in the present kalpa alone are diverse and profound, wondrous and supreme. Even if I could eulogise the collection of merits of virtues of one Buddha alone with a thousand tongues, I still will not be able to complete a smidgeon of it, and how much more so would be to eulogise the merits of virtues of all those Buddhas ?

Suppose that in between the great terra and the sky, all the way up to the realm of Akaniṣṭha, were to be filled up with water, I would still be able to measure the total number of water droplets by the tip of a hair. By comparation, it is just not possible even to gauge and

[31] Gajapati, the Lord of Elephants.

understand the collection of merits of virtues of one Buddha alone.

As I now pay obeisance and extol the collections of merits of virtues of those Buddhas, I too would want to be purified in all my actions of body, speech and mind, and also undertake to practise endless deeds of virtues. I would only attest myself to the unsurpassed supreme enlightenment without leaving any of all those sentient beings behind."

Having extolled merits of virtues of the Buddhas, this King of the people made further numerous resolves as follows :

"Wherever I may be born in furure lives throughout the myriads of aeons, may I always see such wondrous golden drum in my dream, and therein able to listen to the profound meanings of the sound of penitentiary practice. My lustrous and immaculate complexion is the result of often extolled merits of virtues of the Buddhas in the present life, and I wish that I would also acquire the same in my future lives.

Collections of the merits of virtues of all those Buddhas are unimaginable, and absolutely difficult to come by even in hundreds of thousands of aeons. I thus wish that in my numerous lives in the future, I will be able to see the Buddhas (and hear their teachings) in dream at night, and also be able to relate those instructions truly as they are after I wake up in the morning.

I shall perfect my practise of the six *pāramitā* so as to be in congruence with my undertaking for delivering all sentient beings from the briny of all sufferings, and thereafter this body of mine shall then realise the unsurpassed supreme enlightenment, and by virtue of which to bring forth my fruitional domain (of Buddhakṣetra), that which is peerless.

By reason of making presentation of the golden drum (concerning the penitentiary practices) and also extolment (of the merits of virtues) of all those Buddhas, I wish to avail myself of this resultant fruition so that I shall be able to meet Śākyamuni Buddha in one of my future lives, to be given his guidance and foretelling of my fulfilment in Buddhahood. May also the two kumāra, by the name of Kanakabhujendra and Kanakaprabā, always be born in my home, so that together we can be accorded the foretelling of fulfilling our respective Buddhahood.

If there are living beings who are hard-pressed by the varied sufferings, are bereft of refuge, without anyone coming to their deliverance, I shall in future times provide them with considerable salvage, protection and a safe refuge, bring to end of their sufferings, and accord them virtues and blissfulness.

I have resolved myself to practise in the path of Bodhisattvayāna in all my future lifetimes, the duration of which is immeasurable by aeons as is (inestimability of) the farthest limit of this primal nature [32]. By virtue of this penitentiary practice as instructed in the golden-illumining discourse, may my briny of wickedness, briny of karmic obstructions, and briny of fretfulness and vexations all be dried up without a remainder.

Obversely, may my briny of merits of virtues (collected in accord with the practice of Bodhisattvayāna) be fulfilled, and my briny of supramundane knowledge and wisdom be pure and complete. May I also be complete with the numerous merits of virtues in practising the auxiliary means in the path to enlightenment, like an ocean abounding with the rare treasures.

As a result of the power of one's confession and penitence as taught in this golden-illumining discourse, it begets merits of virtues in accord with *bodhi*, whereby the radiance of that wisdom is brilliant, immaculate, and unhindered, reflecting upon oneself clearly and taintlessly.

I shall in some future life be endowed with an awe-inspiring supernormal power as consequent of my collected merits of virtues, by which the magnificent radiance emanating from my body would shine everywhere, effulgent like blaze of fire. The power engendered by those merits of virtues would be the most extraordinary and most excellent in the three spheres of existence.

The power brought forth by the collection of those merits of virtues (as is effected in all the Tathāgatas), is undiminishable as ever, and I would make use of it to continuously carry sentient beings across the briny of all sufferings, and ensconce them instead in the briny of blessed merits. Those delivered beings shall thenceforth undertake practices in the path leading to bodhi, just like all those Buddhas in the past who have undertaken practices in realising their unsurpassed, supreme state of enlightenment.

All Buddhas of the past, present, and future aeons, invariably accomplish their immaculate and wondrous Buddhakṣetras. All those Buddhas, are most honourable and supreme, whose collections of the merits of virtues are beyond measure. This inspires me to accomplish in some future period similarly such most extraordinary and superlative collection of the merits of virtues and Buddhakṣetra, like that of the Buddha, World-Honoured One."

[32] The term「本際」means our primal nature or the original essence of *parinirvāṇa*, is referring to *buddhatā*, or *bhūtatathatā*, or *tathāgatagarbha*, is illimitable in and by itself.

Ruchiraketu ! You should understand that you were King Suvarṇabhujendra at that time. The two kumāras, Kanakabhujendra and Kanakaprabā at that time are currently your two sons, Rūpyaketu and Rūpyaprabha."

Chapter 5 : The Principle of Śūnyatā

As there are already many other discourses which have set forth extensively regarding the principle of insubstantiality (*śūnyatā*), and therefore this principle herein will only be cursorily illustrated.

Ordinary beings are commonly dim-witted, are slight in wisdom, are unable to understand at length the legions of significations of the term *śūnyatā*, is the reason this discourse would briefly shed light on it.

It's for this reason of their dull-wittedness which necessitates provision of the various different ingenious means of expedient and causes for warrants that I presently, out of great compassion, elucidate the excellent contents of this discourse.

As what I have explained in understanding the ideation of ordinary beings, that this body, as a matter of fact is unreal and deceptive, is like an assemblage of nothing but emptiness. It's like an empty village that is impinged upon by the six kinds of cognitive objects, and the six senses are colluded with these thieves, dwelling individually in all their functionalities, without knowing each other.

The ocular sense lets in corporeal objects; the auditory sense distinguishes sounds; the olfactory sense smells at odours; the gustatory sense dotes on flavours; the tactile sense covets the experiencing of touches; the ideatory sense differentiates all those dharmas. The respective cognitions engendered by the senses, are the results of each and every one of these sense-organs directing towards perceptual objects individually, without being transposable in relation to the dissimilar conditioned objects.

The mind is likened to delusive illusions, tending to gallop after the six kinds of sensation, and often discriminately distinguishes between all those dharmas as a result of one's own delusory perceptions. It is the same as in mundane beings who run after such empty hamlet, are impaired by the thieves, and still they are so benighted and not aware of the need for avoiding them.

The mind is consistently reliant upon phenomenal realms of the six sensory cognitions, each of which is only aware of its own focused

object of inspection, according to corporeal forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tactiles, and thoughts that each of them follows.

When the mind fondly fixates on the sixfold sensation, it is akin to a bird that is entrapped helplessly in the net, and such a mind always dwells in those senses which follow intently those phenomenal objects, without even for a moment willingly relinquishing any of them.

As this body is inherently insubstantial, it is thereby unreal and deceptive, is originally without disputes, nor also has it a real host to which it belongs, and so attention shouldn't be given to continually nurturing it for benefits. This body comes into being as a consequence of the union of all those different factors and conditions, lacking what is concretely perdurable and real, is basically why one gives rise to his delusory perceptions.

The operative mechanism of the various forces of karma-born resultants explains the provisional coalescence of this empty hamlet, andf moreover, the assemblage of this body which is ascribed to the four great elements representing the properties of extension, cohesion, heat, and motion, are constantly altering, crippling one another.

This situation is comparable to the four snakes which are kept together in one case, and as these four snakes vary in their nature, having two of them which move up and the other two which move down, and similarly also moving by twos in any directions, and these four big snakes will at last all perish.

Nature of the two snakes of earth-liquid elements are descending, Nature of the two snakes of fire-wind elements are ascending. The two natures of consciousness and mind are restless all the time. Beings may be reborn in those realms of humans and deities, depending upon nature of the deeds that they have performed; or they may descend into those woeful realms of existence in the afterlife according to the types of actions which they have done.

When the four great elements have come to the time of their final disintegration and destruction, the little and more of all those putrid filths will be flowing out of the body. Besides, worms will form all over the dead body, nothing at all of a pleasant sight. It only has to be given away or just discard it to charnel ground, like the rotten wood.

Virtuous divinity ! It behoves you to contemplate that the same is also true of all those dharmas, and hereinto where can be seen (the existential constancy of) individual and sentient beings ? The

fundamental nature of beings is inherently nirvāṇic, but because of their preponderant ignorance that it brings about their opined states of existence (and inexistence) about things. In this respect, each of the four great elements are unreal, for the reason that they do not come into being (and disintegrate) all by themselves, nor are they originally of the nature for coalescence with others [33].

It is due to this reason that I have explained about the four great elements as even though being basically unreal, yet they come into effect through combination with one another. Characteristics of the essence of ignorance is likewise fundamentally inexistential, but it only comes into play owing to the reason of one's delusory perceptions through the active combination of various mental factors.

The term ignorance is just a nominal designation, for in effect it does not exist, is thus I have taught it (in the twelvefold factor of dependent co-arising) as called ignorance, mental formations, consciousnesses, mind-matter, the six bases, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, existences, birth, aging and death [34]. and what comes along with them as all those apprehensions and afflictions. The magnitude of sufferings on account of the faulty actions of sentient beings are inconceivable, and they know no bounds of their predestined continual cycle of birth and death, just as the wheel of transmigration turns without stopping.

Suchness of sentient beings is fundamentally without the arising (and falling away of the mental projections), nor does it at all susceptible to implications of the combination (of different factors and conditions), but it is only because worldlings cannot rightly think for themselves that they have carried out all those erroneous actions (physically, verbally, and mentally, and thus they go through the transmigratory round unendingly).

I would instruct and guide all sentient beings to dispel their disoriented views of the egoistic self and immoral encumberments, and by means of my wisdom-sword that their nets of afflictions shall be cleaved through. Meditation practitioners ought to contemplate such abode of their five aggregates as essentially insubstantial and fundamentally nirvāṇic, so that they can eventually attest to the unsurpassed supreme enlightenment and realising their excellent, wondrous merits of virtues.

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[33] In another word, they are extraneous to what is your fundamentally pure Buddha-nature.

[34] dvādaśaṅga pratītyasamutpāda : *avidyā, saṃskāra, vijñāna, nāmarūpa, ṣaḍāyatana, sparśa, vedanā, tṛṣṇā, upādāna, bhava, jāti, jarāmaraṇa*.

For the sake of all beings, I have opened the nectar-minded gateway and provided them with nectar-orientated vessels and tools that would bring them to the city of nectar, where they will ensconce themselves in the abode of copious ambrosia, and to let those sentient beings savour the real taste of *amṛta* of immortality. Also, I have blown the huge conch of dharma, have beaten the huge drum of dharma, have kindled the huge torch of dharma, and I have been showering beings the mizzles of most excellent dharma, corresponding to the ambrosia of immortality.

I heretofore have quelled all yokes of resentment, and erected the best of all, wonderful banner of my teaching, in order to deliver all those sentient beings beyond the briny of birth and death, and so that to be able to permanently sever the passages to the three woeful realms of existence that are bristling with boundless anguishes and sufferings.

Worldlings are incandesced with afflictions, are being burned helplessly, and who are bereft of aids, having nothing whatsoever they can depend on. I would satiate those beings with the cooling, palatable nectar (of my teachings) so as to release them from the scorching, and consequently throughout the numerous aeons to come, they would be practitioners who shall keep closely with their practices of morality, making offerings and paying obeisance to all those Buddhas, the World-Honoured Ones.

Besides, those practitioners shall practise resolutely in the path leading to supreme enlightenment, and seek after their personal attestation to fulfilling the dharmakāya of Tathāgatahood. What comes along with their realisation are their forthright unhesitation in forsaking what they weigh and value most, including their possessed wealth and treasures, such as gold, silver, lapis lazulis, pearls, gems, and varied other rare precious stones, to the extent of readily donating away their own limbs, eyes, bone marrow, parts of their brains and head, and even their beloved wives and children.

Chapter 6 : The Four World-Guarding Celestial Monarchs

At that time, Vaiśravaṇa-devarāja, Dhṛtarāṣṭra-devarāja, Virūḍhaka-devarāja, and Virūpākṣa-devarāja [35] stood up from their seats, drew the upper garment over their left shoulders, knelt on their right knee, held their palms together respectfully, and said to the Buddha, “World-Honoured One ! This

[35] Cātur-mahārājakāyika : 毘沙門天王 (北方多聞天王)、提頭賴吒天王 (東方持國天王)、毘留勒叉天王 (南方增長天王)、毘留博叉天王 (西方廣目天王).

excellent golden-illumining discourse, considered as foremost amongst the sūtras, has been well supported by the Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones, has been the basis for adorning the profound and superlative blessed merits of the Bodhisattvas, and is always venerated by all those devas and celestial gods, which brings to rejoice of the four world-guarding celestial Monarchs as well as their extolment. This sūtra illumines those celestial palaces. Such a sūtra can accord sentient beings happiness; can dry up the streams (of wretchedness) of the realms of hells, ghosts, and creatures; can dispel the myriads of trepidations of beings; has the power to repel those intruding enemies from foreign places, has the power to steer clear of widespread famine consequent on poor harvests; has the power to overcome pestilences; can work wonders to trounce variations of the unpropitious constellations; is capable of eliminating all the worries and anguishes of life. In short, this sūtra can help to extinguish the myriad distresses and afflictions of all sentient beings.

World-Honoured One ! Regarding this excellent golden-illumining sūtra, if someone were to elucidate its contents to the assemblies, the four celestial Monarchs of us together with our respective retinues, upon listening to such unparalleled nectar-analogue dharma, it would wax our bodily strength, would mentally boost our valour and vigour, would imbue us with the august virtues.

World-Honoured One ! The four celestial Monarchs of us can talk about the true teaching, also regularly practice the true teaching, and support by being dharma-rulers of the world who reign by the true teachings [36].

World-Honoured One ! The four celestial Monarchs of us, together with devatās, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kiṃnaras, and mahoragas, for the benefits of those who rule the nations with the true teachings, we would assist to inhibit the evil demons, the devourers of vital energies, and the like.

World-Honoured One ! The four celestial Monarchs of us, together with the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others [37], and numerous other Yakṣas, by means of our unblemished divine eyes that surpass those human eyes, we always guard this whole Jambudvīpa. World-Honoured One ! This being the reason why we are called Guardians of the world. If in wherever domains in this Jambudvīpa, there happens well-being of a state is on massive decline, or overrun by foreign armies, or plagued by famine, pestilences, and various other calamities, and if in such cases there are monks who practise and uphold this sūtra, the four celestial Monarchs of us would advise them by way of our supernormal powers, so that these monks will quickly set out to the affected counties of the state, to teach at length and spread abroad the teaching of this wonderful golden-illumining sūtra. We would then let hundreds of thousands

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[36] 《金光明最勝王經》：我等四王修行正法，常說正法，以法化世 ...

[37] These twenty-eight groups are within the realm of Cātur-mahārājakāyika, comprise of generals of the Yakṣas and their retinues of Yakṣas. The four directions of N,E,S,W, each has one group. The six directions NE, SE, SW, NW, Top, Down, each has four groups.

myriad of such degenerative situations be eliminated.

World-Honoured One ! If in any regions of the territory, there came such monks who devoutly observe this sūtra, the king of this state should go over to the place of these monks to listen to this excellent discourse. Having delighted in hearing the teaching, the king should accord respect and provides protection to these people. World-Honoured One ! We the four celestial Monarchs would then sedulously guard this king and his subjects, to render them security and peace by obliterating all those degenerative cataclysms.

World-Honoured One ! If there are bhikṣus or bhikṣuṇīs or upāsakas or upāsikās who dedicatedly practise and uphold this sūtra, and if those kings of the people who can offer them the requisites and provide them the serene places of dwelling, the four celestial Monarchs of us likewise will do our part to bring about security, peace and sufficiency to the king and his subjects, and or them be free from all those disasters. World-Honoured One ! Wherever there is any or all of these four kinds of Buddhist disciples who has been devoutly reciting and observing this excellent sūtra, and if this king of the people is able to offer them the daily requisites with respect, accord honour and praise on their dedication, the four celestial Monarchs of us will likewise ensure this king to always receive the loftiest gifts with respect and be accorded exceptional honour and praises amongst all the kings, and will also make all the other kings to esteem, admire, and extol his deeds of virtue.

At that time, the World-Honoured One praised the four celestial Monarchs, Guardians of the world, “Very good ! Excellent ! All ye four monarchs have in the past made offerings in veneration, honoured and extolled the hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of Buddhas, and have planted your roots of virtues under the guidance of those Buddhas, explicated to others the true teaching, consistently practised the true teaching, by virtue of which you thus become the celestial Monarchs and became also the kings of people who ruled regions of the world by teachings of the Buddhas. All ye since long hitherto, out of your resolved great compassion, have had well-being of the sentient beings at heart, accorded them profusely all those peacefulness and happiness, and have been able to rein in adversities, and perseveringly carring out all those beneficial deeds of virtue. For these reasons thus, if there are the kings of the people who can make generous offerings reverentially (in the name of) this excellent teaching of the golden-illumining sūtra, the four of you rightly must support and protect them, to dispel their distresses and afflictions, and accord them security and happiness.

If all ye the four monarchs and your retinues, along with the myriads of Yakṣas, are able to conscientiously guard those (who truly practise and uphold) this sūtra, it is the same thing as guarding and supporting the true teachings of those Buddhas of the past, present and future ages. All ye four monarchs and your retinues, together with the hundreds of thousands of Yakṣas of the other celestial realms are continually in battle with those hordes of Asuras, and your

group and those Devas always come out victorious. Although having said that, if all ye and those devas can guard and support this excellent sūtra, it can help to suppress and dispel all those sufferings of others, namely those adversities of inimical adversaries, famine, and pestilences. If there are those amongst the four groups of disciples [38] who are able to recite, practise, and uphold this excellent sūtra, all ye should also sedulously guard and protect them, for the sake of dissipating their enervative afflictions, and accord them serenity and happiness."

At that time, the four celestial Monarchs said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! In future when the teaching of this excellent golden-illumining sūtra is being circulated to cities, districts, and villages of the different regions, whereby if those kings concerned reign the regions by the law in connection with celestial existences [39], who are also able to listen to this wonderful discourse with respect and in earnest, as well as to honour, making offerings to and necessary provisions for the four groups of Buddhist disciples who practise and uphold this discourse, by virtue of which we (the four monarchs and our retinues, along with all those devas) will be able to listen to this wonderful discourse every now and then, and thereupon it will wax our bodily strength, mentally boost our valour and vigour, and will also imbue us with awe-inspiring virtues. It is for this reason that the four of us and those numerous Yakṣas always shall make ourselves invisible in following this wonderful sūtra to wherever places it goes, and provide the support and protection to ensure that the particular region is not hindered by adversities. Also, we would watchfully guard those kings of the regions and their ministers who have listened to and practised this discourse, as well as the masses, to avert otherwise the adversities and their tribulations so as to provide them security, and also to turn back those invading foreign armies, if any. Suppose that there is a king of the people who is engaged in listening to the teaching of this sūtra, during which time a neighbouring hostile enemy decides with such a thought as 'I would deploy my four battalions of army to bring down his state.' World-Honoured One ! Owing to the supernormal power of this wonderful sūtra, this hostile neighbouring enemy will be hindered by difficult armed conflict with another regional ruler, subsequently causing those enfeebling tribulations, different disasters, and diseases. At the time when these adversities are all over in this hostile neighbouring state, and the enemy readies his four battalions of army to encroach upon this state, then the four of us and our retinues, along with the myriad other Yakṣas, will make ourselves invisible to protect and assist this state, to cause dreads in the enemies by bringing forth the varied hindering adversities, and to make the invading

[38] monks and nuns, male and female lay practitioners.

[39] 天律 refers to law that applies to the heavens. Beings practising no less than the tenfold virtuous deed in full compliance, will earn themselves a place amongst the six sensuous realms in the hereafter.

enemies turning themselves back naturally as would be expected. As even the armies of this hostile neighbouring state cannot intrude, how possibly any damage can they cause to this region ? ”

At that time, the World-Honoured One praised the four celestial Monarchs and their retinues, “Well ! Very good ! All ye four monarchs had been able to guard me conscientiously throughout the hundreds of thousands of millions *nayutāḥ* [40] of aeons, during those periods I had been practising for the eventual attestation to realising *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi*, and also guarding those kings of the people who practise this sūtra, who have made generous offerings reverentially (in the name of its excellent teaching), for helping them to avert all those degenerative misfortunes, to bring on security and happiness to them. Also, you have been conscientiously guarding the royal palaces and residences of these kings, their cities, villages, and border region of the territory, to the extent of keeping their hostile enemies back, dispelling their debilitative anxieties, bringing them security and peace, as well as have been able to bring about non-happenings of massive human deaths as a consequence of wars amongst those kings in regions of Jambudvīpa.

Four monarchs you ought to be aware that the eighty-four thousand or so of those cities and villages in this Jambudvīpa, wherein the eighty-four thousands or so kings of the people are each living with pleasure and happiness in their own states, are each at liberty to do their own things in their own states. They each have bountiful wealth and sources of treasure, and their self-sufficiencies is the reason the kings of those regions do not encroach upon each other. As knowing to accept willingly the given lordship and conditions in consequence of the accumulation of their own actions done in prior lives, they do not give rise to the evil thoughts of craving (the wealth and resources of) other states. Each of them really brings forth such mind as dedicating to the mutual benefits of one another, and gives rise to the compassionate mind, the joyful and happy mind, the un-disputatious mind, the non-harming mind, and without having such mind perversely disposed to fettering and whipping others. Indeed, each of them in their own regions readily raise themselves up by their own bootstraps for the sake of their own joy and happiness, and so the aristocrats and commoners are living in harmony, intermingling well just like the milk mixing with water, appreciating and caring for one another while fostering their roots of wholesomeness. It’s due to this reason that those other regions in Jambudvīpa are places of stability, yielding good harvests, happiness prevailing; the people are prosperous as they benefit from the vast fertile lands; lunisolar harmony is always stable and so the seasons are timely in their sequence; sun, moon, and asterisms do not work out of normality; the availability of wind and rain follow exactly with the seasons, and major catastrophes are not seen; the people are generally self-sufficient and well off, who aren’t avaricious nor are miserly or envious in nature; they equitably

[40] A unit of *nayutaḥ* is the equivalent of 100,000,000,000.

practise the ten deeds of virtues, and as a result are often reborn in heavens in the afterlife and thus the celestial palaces will be teeming with the enhancing heavenly beings.

If in future there are kings of the people who listen to this sūtra, and also make offerings in veneration to the four groups of Buddhist disciples who practise and uphold this sūtra, then these kings will also be benefitting the well-being and happiness of all ye four monarchs and your retinues, as well as those hundreds of thousands numerous accompanying Yakṣas. How might this be so ? If all ye four monarchs listen to this sūtra every so often, then all ye will have been gotten nectar of the true teaching, the taste of this water you imbibe would wax your bodily strength, mentally boost your valour and vigour, and would imbue you with the august virtues. If these kings of the people were able to listen to this sūtra in earnest, then similarly they will have made their offerings to me. And if they make offerings to me, then they are similarly making offerings to all those Buddhas of the past, present, and future ages. If they are making offerings to Buddhas of the past, present, and future ages, then they would acquire the boundless, inconceivable collections of their merits of virtues. It is for this reason that these aforesaid kings of the people should be accorded protection, as well as their empresses and concubines, maids in the imperial palace, retinues of the empress, princes and princesses should also be guarded, so that their otherwise debilitative tribulations can be dispelled, happiness blooming, palaces and the imperial halls will be safe and peaceful without the impending disasters, and divinities of those residences will enhance their respect-inspiring virtuous merits, and so that everyone concerned can experience the immense joy and happiness. The people in the regions of these kings will hence commonly rejoice in the various pleasures deriving from the fivefold sense-desire while all those other misfortunes will be eliminated altogether."

At that time, the four celestial Monarchs said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Suppose that in future there is a king of the people who desires to be given guard to himself and his empress, concubines, maids, princes, princesses and the others, and also to his palace and imperial residences; who desires to be given the utmost protection to himself as well as to those extraordinary administrative systems under his kingship, and to be saturated with the incredible blessed merits of a king; who desires to acquire the boundless collection of blessings; who desires to have no hostile foreign enemies encroaching on his territory, and to be spared from all those worries, afflictions, and miserable incidents. World-Honoured One ! It is imperative that this king must not give himself up to distractions of the mind and dissipations. He should instead beget a modest and respectful mind; should make adornment to his palace and halls to be the best of all, wondrous and most excellent; to splash the ground with aromatic liquid; to strew around lion-seat of the great dharma-throne with the various kinds of flowers as well as

ornament it with the different myriads precious and rare objects; to fit up the halls with many wonderful hanging banners and canopies. This king should take a clean bathe, then apply perfume on his body, put on the clean attire; to don himself with necklace threaded with the ornaments; to sit on a lowly small seat without any of his personal vanity; to listen and adhere to this excellent sūtra with a right state of mind by shedding his usual regal bearing, by casting off all of his dissoluteness, by comporting himself in a self-effacing manner and dispensing with his conceit and typical superciliousness, and to regard the person who expounds this sūtra as he would his respect for the World-Honoured One. Further, he should bring forth a compassionate mind with genial countenance when speaking to his empress, concubines, princes, princesses, maids and others in the palace, to advise them to make the various offerings of requisites in veneration to the Buddhist monks and nuns. At that time, this king upon giving them the advice, will have kindled in himself numerous joy and happiness, be filled with such delightfulness so much so that his self-encouragement will be enhanced many times more, and will frequently carry out acts of benevolence with an unflagging energy, as well as will thenceforth hold much more respect for preachers of the Buddha's discourses."

At that time, the World-Honoured One said to the four celestial Monarchs "At that time, this king of the people must put on the clean white garment; must adorns himself by donning a necklace threaded with the various ornaments; must personally hold the simple white but elegant and exquisite canopy, with his attire and imposing appearance not be out of the proper bearing; and must go out to welcome and invite the preacher of the Buddha's discourses in person. For what reason ? This king, in every of the steps in this respect and thenceforward that he is taking, he is said as making the reverent offerings to the hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ of the Buddhas, the World-Honoured Ones, as if with whom he meets. Moreover, he will triumph over as numerous the number of hardships of rebirths as are those inconceivable periods of aeons. Besides, in the future numerous aeons to come, he will always be bestowed upon the crown of Cakravartirājāḥ. Also, in every of the steps he is taking in this connexion, he will acquire the incredible power of unhindered effortlessness as a result of his amassed merits of virtues in the present life; will always acquire palaces on earth and in heavens that are fitted up with the most extraordinary, wonderful seven kinds of gems; will often be having the plus benefit of longevity wherever he is born; will often be endued with confidence in his gifted eloquence and trustworthiness to many other people; will often be given the great appellation of fearlessness in handling things; will always be respected by both humans and celestial beings, and enjoy the utmost happiness amongst humans and in heavens; will always acquire the awe-inspiring great influential power; will always be born with the wonderful bodily complexions that are most striking with the strict propriety; will always meet those Buddhas and come across the wise mentors; and he will accomplish

himself completely with his boundless collection of merits of virtues.

All ye four celestial Monarchs ! Having the vision of such varied and boundless benefits of the merits of virtues to be obtained, is therefore this king of the people should go out to welcome and invite preacher of the Buddha's discourses in person. Whether it be one yojana [41] away, or up to the distance of a hundred or a thousand yojanas, he should evoke such thought about this expounder of the dharma (*dharmabhāṇaka*) as if about the Buddha himself who arrives, and should give such thought to himself thus, 'Today, the Buddha with true wisdom is coming to my palace, to accept my offering, to explain to me about the discourse, and upon hearing such discourse, it would amount to non-retrogression unswervingly of me towards *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*, and it corresponds to personally meeting the hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ of Buddhas; corresponds to personally making offerings to all those Buddhas of the past, present and future ages; corresponds to eradicating myself completely from undergoing agonies in the three woeful realms. I have presently sowed the seeds for the innumerable future lives of becoming Cakravartirājāḥ, Śakra-devānāmindra, and Mahā-Brahma. I have planted seeds and roots of an illimitable expanse of virtues. I have resolved myself [42] on liberating the numerous sentient beings from the cycle of birth and death. I have accumulated for myself an immeasurable collection of merits of virtues. Protection has been provided to the royal harem. Impending disasters to my palace and those residences have been averted. A thorn in my side of the imminent hostile enemies to this territory has been removed, and my territory no longer will be browbeaten and encroached upon by the foreign hostile adversaries.'

All ye four celestial Monarchs ! This king of the people should carry out offerings to the true teaching in this way, to listen to this excellent sūtra with his pure mind, and to reverently making his offerings in honour and praise to the four groups of Buddhist disciples who practise and uphold this sūtra. He should also dedicate a part of this superlative merits of virtues which he has acquired to the four of you, as well as to your retinues and those other concerned Yakṣas. This king thus obtained these blessed merits, will always in the present life becomes possessed of the immeasurable and inconceivable benefit of (the power of) unhindered effortlessness, will accomplish himself completely with his awe-inspiring royal potency, and is able to smite down all things of the wicked nature by means of the true teaching."

At that time, the four celestial Monarchs said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! If in future there are kings of the people who thus pay

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[41] Sanskrit term *yojana*, the unit measure of distance in ancient India, is of several kinds: a large yojana is about 80 miles, a middling yojana is about 60 miles, a regular yojana is about 40 miles. Other unit measures of 32 miles, 16 miles, or lesser have also been used as in measuring a day's march for the army, or a day's distance the cart is pulled by oxen.

[42] 《金光明最勝王經》：當令…。《金光明經》：已令…。

obeisance to the true teaching, listening earnestly to this excellent sūtra, making offerings reverently in honour and giving praise to the four groups of Buddhist disciples who practise and uphold this sūtra, making the prescribed arrangement for adorning the hall and residences, and splashing the ground with the aromatic liquid, listening attentively with the right state of mind to the dharma-expounder, the four monarchs of us are also amongst the audience listening to this sermon of this dharma (but are unseen). May these kings of the people, for their self-benefits, dedicate a few of their acquired merits of virtues to us and the rest concerned.

World-Honoured One ! At the place where the dharmabhāṇaka sits, these kings of the people who burn the various kinds of incense in making offering in veneration to this sūtra, for the sake of us, the fine redolence of which in an instant will get to our celestial palaces. Its perfume at that time will form canopies-alike formed of the fragrant smokes [43], and the wondrous redolence radiates gold-coloured light, illumining our palaces as well as the palace of Śakra-devānāmindra and the palace of Mahā-Brahma. Sarasvatī devatā, Lakṣmī devatā, Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā, Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa - the formost chief commander of Yakṣas, the great generals of the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas, Lord Maheśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Maṇibhadra – the great general of Yakṣas, Hāritī bhūta-mātā devatā along with her five hundred sons surrounding her, Anavatapta Nāgarāja, and Sāgara Nāgarāja — all of them will smell this fine redolence in their respective palaces, and will see the canopies-alike of the smokes of fragrant redolence that shine radiantly everywhere. Radiance of these canopy-like smokes of fragrant redolence also illumines all those other celestial palaces."

The World-Honoured One said to the four celestial Monarchs, "Radiance of these canopies-alike of fragrant redolence will not only get to thy celestial palaces, of thou the four monarchs. Wherefore is it so ? When these kings of the people lift up the censers that contain the incense, making venerated offerings in the name of this sūtra, its fragrance in an instant diffuse extensively up to the extent of the three thousand times the mega trichiliocosm of world systems, and (within which) the ten billion or so suns and moons, ten billion or so brinies, ten billion or so Sumerus, ten billion or so Cakravālas, Mahācakravālas, and those kings of these enclosing peaks, ten billion or so worlds of the four mega continents, ten billion or so heavenly kings of the realm of the four celestial Monarchs, ten billion or so divinities of the thirty-three heavens [44] , and all the way up to the ten billion or so Naiva-saṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana formless heavens. The ten billion or so divinities of the thirty-three heavens in the three thousand times the mega trichiliocosm of world systems, wherein the space above the palaces of all those Devatās, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garuḍas, Kiṃnaras, and Mahoragas will all be

[43] The term 「香蓋」means 香煙雲蓋 or 香雲蓋。

[44] The thirty-three heavens that surround the Trāyāstriṃśā heaven.

permeated with the varied seeming-canopy smokes of fragrant redolence, and these seeming-canopy smokes emitting gold-coloured brilliance, similarly also illumining their palaces. The happenings of all those various sorts of canopy-like smokes of fragrant redolence in those three thousand times the mega trichiliocosm of world systems, are indeed attributed to the power of stateliness and sacrosanctity originating in this sūtra.

When these kings of the people hold up the censers with the burning incense, making their venerated offerings in the name of this sūtra, not only does the various fragrant redolences of smokes permeate to as far as the three thousand times the mega trichiliocosm of world systems, but in an instant they also permeate up to the hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of worlds of those Buddhas in the ten directions of space as numerous as there are the total grains of sand in the Ganges River. In the vast space atop all those Buddhas, the various fragrant redolences also form the canopy-alike of smokes, and also emanate the gold-coloured brilliance, illumining everywhere. All those Buddhas in their respective worlds throughout the ten directions of space as numerous as there are the total sand-grains in the Ganges River, having smelt such fine fragrance, having seen such canopy-alike of smokes and the golden light, and having performed these kinds of supernormal transmutations, said in unanimous voices in praise of this dharmabhāṇaka thus, 'Very good ! Excellent ! Great being, since you are able to teach at length and spread abroad this sūtra of the wondrous profundity, you thereby would accomplish yourself with the limitless and inconceivable collection of blessed merits. If there are beings who have come to listen to the elucidation of this profound sūtra, they will acquire a good few of their blessed merits, and how much the more so are those who can recite and practise it, and explain for the different levels of individuals the significations of the discrete contents of it. How so ? Virtuous man ! If there are some amongst the myriad great beings and other beings who might have heard (or read with a full understanding of) this wonderful golden-illumining sūtra, they will not retrogress from their endeavour in pursuit of realising *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*.' "

At that time, all those presently existing, myriad Buddhas in their respective worlds in the ten directions of space as numerous as there are the total sand-grains in the Ganges River, said in one voice, "Virtuous man ! You are certain to be fully enlightened in your next life during sitting meditation on site of practice at the foot a bodhi tree, to become the most excellent and most honourable, surpassing all beings within the three spheres of existences. Being perseverant in your diligence of practice is therefore you will be able to go through all those austerities, will be able to skilfully adorn your bodhi-site [45], will be able to demolish all those fallacies of the heretical paths throughout the three thousand times the mega trichiliocosm of world systems, will be able to

[45] *bodhimaṇḍa* (菩提道場), the seat under the bodhi tree which raised itself where our historical Buddha realised the peerless supreme enlightenment.

subdue all those varying forms of the devils of Māra and hostile demons, will be able to fully awakened to the most pre-eminent *nirvāṇa* of all dharmas, the pure and immaculate, the profound and unsurpassed enlightenment.

Virtuous man ! You are already capable of taking the seat on the site of indestructable throne [46] , for turning dharma-wheel of the profound and unmatched twelvefold practice [47] which is praised by all the Buddhas, capable of beating the unsurpassed greatest dharma-drum, capable of blowing the unsurpassed wondrous conch of dharma, capable of erecting the unsurpassed most excellent banner of dharma, capable of kindling the unsurpassed most effulgent torch, capable of showering the unsurpassed ambrosia-mizzles of dharma, capable of severing the boundless bonds of indignation and affliction, capable of carrying the boundless beings through the eldritch and limitless vast briny, so that they can be liberated from the endless cycle of birth and death, to be able to meet with the myriad milliards of Buddhas for their guidance."

At that time, the four celestial Monarchs said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! The profound, wonderful contents of this golden-illumining sūtra will make for (the listeners and upholders of it) to obtain the boundless myriads of blessed merits in the present lifetime and subsequent lives. Thus, if a king of the people who has listened to and truly upheld in earnest of the significations expounded in this wonderful discourse, he indeed has planted seeds and roots of virtues under the teachings of the hundreds of thousands of millions of myriad Buddhas. Holding respect to and keeping in mind of this king, as well as seeing benefit of the boundless blessed merits, the four monarchs of us together with our retinues of the myriads of Yakṣas, when beholding the various auspicious signs of canopy-like smokes and clouds of fragrant redolence in our respective palaces, all of us shall then make ourselves invisible for the sake of going to the site of the palace where the sūtra is being taught, for listening to the dharma. And because of wanting to listen to the elucidation of the discourse, the Lord Mahā-Brahma, Lord Śakra-devānāmindra, Sarasvatī devatā, Lakṣmī devatā, Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā, Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa along with many others, the great generals of the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and many others, Lord Maheśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Maṇibhadra Mahāyakṣa, Hāritī bhūta-mātā devatā along with her five hundred sons surrounding her in company, Anavatapta Nāgarāja, Sāgara Nāgarāja, and the myriads of those celestial demons and divinities will make their bodies invisible, to come to the place of this king of the people where the dharma is being taught.

World-Honoured One ! We, the four monarchs, and our retinues of the

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[46] *vajrāsana* (金剛座), the meaning is synonymous with the term *bodhimaṇḍa*.

[47] *Cf.* Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra, fascicle 81. The twelvefold practice as regards the bases of dependence on expedient means. 「得方便事依處，復有十二種行。一者欲行。二者離行。三者善行。四者不善行。五者苦行。六者非苦行。七者順退分行。八者順進分行。九者雜染行。十者清淨行。十一者自義行。十二者他義行。」

numerous Yakṣas, shall in a unanimous mind regard this king of the people as our wise mentor, and with whom together we shall carry out deeds of virtues mutually associated with each other. As this king can be the unrivalled donor of the Buddha's teaching, who satisfies us with the nectar flavour of dharma, we thus should guard this king to free him from the debilitative misfortunes so that his safety and peacefulness can be secured, and also to ensure that all those ruinous ills and disasters can be averted and will not befall his palace and those residences in the cities and villages of his national territory.

World-Honoured One ! If this king of the people forsakes his faith in this sūtra and no longer is delighted to hear about its contents, mentally does not want to venerate nor to make offering in its name, nor wanting to honour and praise about it, or he no longer wants to venerate, to make offering, to honour and praise those who recite, practise and expound this sūtra, then we, the four monarchs, and our retinue of the numerous Yakṣas will not be able to listen to this true dharma, will be turned away and miss out on the great benefit of nectar flavour of dharma, will be destitute of the lively strength and dignified virtues, and the effect of which will also vitiate the quality and size of celestial beings but enhances that of the woeful realms. World-Honoured One ! In this respect, the four monarchs of us and our retinue of the numerous Yakṣas, as well as the numerous good-minded other deities originally also guarding his national territory, all of us will just leave. After we and the rest Yakṣas and deities have left, his national territory will certainly expect a variety of diverse disasters, and the people in general will lose the mind for virtues other than their bondage of aversion and disputes, destroying each other. Also, epidemic will be rampant; comets will oddly appear; meteors will be showering down; the five planets [48] and other constellations [49] will err out of their norms; marvellous spectacles of the sight of two suns, solar eclipse and lunar eclipse will regularly manifest; white-coloured and black-coloured rainbows will regularly appear; earthquakes will occur which give out the roaring sounds; gales and torrential downpours will happen frequently; grains will become very expensive and so famine and hunger will get out of hand; many places in the territory will be invaded and looted by the hostile foreign enemies; the masses will mostly be stricken with agonies; and his territory will be bereft of any lovable place. World-Honoured One ! When the four monarchs of us and our retinues of the numerous Yakṣas, together with all those good-minded deities who originally also guard the territory have ignored and left the region, all these numerous varied adversities will take place.

World-Honoured One ! Suppose that a king of the people is desirous of sufficient self-defense and longing for relishing much security and happiness in his national territory, desires for all the masses in his territory to be fulfilled and receive happiness, desires for subjugating all those foreign invaders,

[48] The planets of Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, Venus, and Mercury.

[49] It refers to the twenty-eight constellations or nakṣatras. (*aṣṭāviṃśati-nakṣatrāṇi*)

desires for protecting all lands of his sovereignty, desires for ruling his national territory with the true teachings, and desires ridding living beings of their trepidations. World-Honoured One ! This king of the people and the rest (his ministers) should listen to the contents of this sūtra, respect and make offerings to those who recite and practise the teaching of this sūtra. We, the four monarchs, and our retinue of the numerous Yakṣas, by virtue of the wholesome root for having the Buddha's dharma as our food [50] , that we have been able to imbibe the unmatched nectar flavour of dharma, which waxes our bodily strength, and boosts the valour and vigour of our minds, thus fostering the benefits of all those divinities. Why ? Because this king of the people listens in earnest to elucidation of the contents of this suṭra, just like when listening to those Lords of Brahma who elucidate on the discourses of freedom from cravings and passions, Lord Śakra-devānāmindra who elucidates on the various discourses of virtues, and beings with the five supernatural powers who elucidate on the discourses about ṛṣi.

World-Honoured One ! Although that the Lords of Brahma, Lord Śakra-devānāmindra, and beings with the five kinds of supernatural power have the milliards innumerable brilliant discourses, this golden-illumining discourse is by far the most excellent amongst them all. How's that so? Because the Tathāgata elucidates this golden-illumining sūtra for the well-being of all sentient beings; for advising all those kings of the people in Jambudvīpa to reign by the true teaching; for providing blessings to all sentient beings; for taking care of all sentient beings; for relieving the living beings in the regions of agonies with non-occurrence of threats and encroachment by the hostile foreign armies, and also all those misfortunes will be well precluded; for letting plebeians of the regions to be free of worries and distresses, ergo, the true teachings have to be provided, so much so that the people can be free from disputes and litigations between themselves. It's for these reasons that kings of the people in their respective regions should kindle the incandescent torch of dharma, and for the true teachings to be conducive to well-being of the divinities (as well). By doing so, the four celestial Monarchs of us and the myriads of Yakṣas, as well as all those virtuous-minded heavenly deities in Jambudvīpa will be able to imbibe sufficiently of the nectar flavour of dharma, to be bristled with considerable august virtues and strength of exertion, so that we can ensure the regions in Jambudvīpa will yield good harvests and results, adding gaiety to the people who will steadily flourish, living happily in their environments. Further, (beings and divinities alike who have listened to this discourse, practised, and upheld it,) in their furure lives throughout the incredibly hundreds of thousands of milliards of innumerable aeons, they will often experience the wondrous finest happiness, and also will be able to meet numerous Buddhas whom they will rely upon for fostering their roots of virtues, and thenceforward they will someday realise *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi*. The

[50] Sanskrit: *dharmāhāra*

attainment of these boundless merits of virtues is told by the truly omniscient Tathāgata by virtue of his great strength of compassion, which surpasses that of those Lords of Brahma in excess of hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ in magnitude; and also as a result of his strength of austerities, which surpasses that of Lord Śakra-devānāmindra similarly by hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ number of times more. It is on account of these reasons that the Tathāgata promulgates this golden-illumining sūtra for the sake of sentient beings. In this connexion, if all those living beings and kings of the people in the regions of Jambudvīpa, intend for the sentient beings to acquire blessing and happiness, then in the worldly discourses that they formulate and those state affairs that they are obliged to deal with, apropos of both the conventional concepts and transcendental ideas, they have to accord closely with (the core principles of) this sūtra, for which the Śākyamuni Tathāgata appears in our world to explain it at length and to have it circulating abroad. World-Honoured One ! For this reason, it behoves those kings of the people to listen in earnest to this sūtra, to venerate it, to make generous offerings in its name, to truly honour and making extolment of it."

At that time, the World-Honoured One told the four celestial Monarchs, "All ye four celestial Monarchs and your retinues of the myriad Yakṣas, if those kings of the people are able to listen earnestly to this sūtra, to venerate it and make generous offerings in upholding it, to truly honour and making extolment of it [51], all ye four monarchs rightly should guard them, to help them to avert all those debilitative misfortunes so as to beget security and happiness to them. If there is someone who can explain to great extent of the true meanings of this sūtra, circulating it around, performing services and deeds accordant with that of the Buddhas, in conjunction with humans and divinities, who thus is able to benefit the myriad sentient beings considerably, then all ye four celestial Monarchs should provide protection to such a person, not to let him be disturbed and troubled by whatsoever varying conditions, but to let him be keeping with the calmness and serenity of mind so as he can experience meditative blissfulness as he has to continue to teach and spread abroad this sūtra."

At that time, the four celestial Monarchs stood up from their seats, drew the upper garment over their left shoulders, knelt on their right knee, held their palms together respectfully, and extolled in verses before the World-Honoured One :

> The Buddha's (bodily hallmarks) are replete with splendour, likened to the pure full moon. The Buddha sends forth thousands of streaks of bright light, likened to effulgence of the sun.

[51] It implies also the same at all times towards the four groups of Buddhist disciples who practise and uphold this sūtra, as well as other scriptures of the Buddha.

The Buddha's visage is of utmost brilliance and immaculateness, and his teeth are spotlessly white as the lotus's roots.

The Buddha's collection of the merits of virtues is immeasurable, likened to the vast briny. And much is the same of his profound wisdom which is boundless, and abounding with dharma-water [52] and the hundreds of thousands of samādhis, without any deficiencies.

Soles of the Buddha's feet are level, with the appearance of a thousand spoked wheels. The Buddha's fingers and toes have the fine web-like appearance, likened to that of the chief of swans.

(Physical characteristics of the Buddha) [53] are radiating brightly, likened to a colossal alp formed of the shining jewels, so exquisite and pure, resembling the refined pure gold.

All merits of virtues realised by the Buddha are inconceivable. To this immeasurable mountain high of the collection of Buddha's merits of virtues, we all now pay our deep reverence.

The Buddha's true body of *dharmatākāya* [54] is comparable to the nature of space, manifests itself in adapting to the dependent objects, is akin to moon reflecting in the clear water. The Buddha's *dharmatākāya* is omnipresent without any hindrances, is like mirage, like a phenomenal transformation [55]. We now for this reason prostrate at the *Buddha-dharmatākāya*, likening to the clear moon (that manifests in the uncontaminated and calm water).

At that time, the Buddha said in verses as follows :

(Merits of the kernel of) this golden-illumining sūtra is the cardinal amongst all those other discourses, is the most extraordinary and unparalleled in terms of profundity, is promulgated by the World-Honoured One who is complete with the ten powers of noble wisdom. All ye four celestial Monarchs by virtue of this should gurad this sūtra with assiduity.

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[52] Sanskrit: *dharmodaka*, water analogous to ultimate truths of the Buddha teaching, which can wash off all of a person's defilements, from the grossest to the subtlest.

[53] It refers to the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor signs on the physical body of Buddha. (相好)

[54] Buddha's dharmatākāya (法性身) is the same as saying Buddha's *dharmakāya* (法身).

[55] It implies the ten metaphors that outline the nature of insubstantiality of all dharmas. Essentially, all things that come to our ideations through the mind-consciousness element (*manovijñānadhātu*), they ought to be apprehended as inherently of the insubstantial nature. *Cf.* Mahāprajñāpāramī-sūtra, fascicle 1 :「諸法如幻、如焰 (陽焰)、如水中月、如虛空、如響、如夢、如影、如揵闥婆城、如鏡中像、如化。」

For this reason, the profound and wonderful core teaching of this sūtra can accord beings the immeasurable extent of happiness, and for the benefit of blessings of all those beings, this discourse should be circulated around in the regions of Jambudvīpa for as long as it takes. (The merits amassed from) the teaching of this sūtra is capable of releasing all those beings in the three thousandfold mega trichiliocosm of world systems from the boundless agonies through rebirth in the woeful realms.

If those kings of the people in the regions of Jambudvīpa are able to bring forth their mercy and benevolence, to circulate around the instructions of this wonderful sūtra, to avail themselves of the true teachings in governing their worldly regional affairs, then those regions will enjoy periods of peace, stability, profuse harvests and booming results, and their masses will be happy.

If those kings of the people hold dear to their own crowns and their sovereign states, desirous of their own regions to be bountifully productive and flourishing, they should take a clean bathe and don the clean attire, then go over to the place where someone is elucidating core contents of this sūtra, and listen to the teaching in earnest.

The teaching in this sūtra can edify the masses to carry out all kinds of deeds of virtues, can works wonder to subdue all those internal adversaries and the impending invasion of external armies, and can also put to rest of the boundless fears towards the inexorable misfortunes. This sūtra, being the cardinal amongst all those other discourses, is able to accord the myriads of all those beings peacefulness and blissfulness.

Like the legendary tree that itself can shed all the precious things in those right homes that it is found, the same is also true of the salient principles of this wonderful sūtra, that it can similarly bring about the inestimable merits of virtues by those kings of the people.

Like the clean and cold water that can slake one's thirst and assuage one's fatigue, likewise too is regarding the core teaching of this wonderful sūtra, which can satisfy the yearning and listlessness of those kings of the people with their accumulated merits of virtues in association with this sūtra.

Like the box of jewels and rare precious things that one holds in the hand, one can use them freely as one wishes, and likewise too is regarding the essential teaching of this golden-illumining sūtra, which those kings of the people can apply it to themselves anywhere at their

disposal in a way as the dharma-treasure.

This golden-illumining sūtra with its excellent principles, is always venerated and worshipped by all those divinities, and also is always given protection by the four world-guarding great celestial Monarchs through their awe-respecting vitality and power. Also, all those Buddhas in the ten directions of space are always mindful of this discourse and accord praises of endorsement whenever there is someone who expounds on the teaching of this sūtra.

Besides, there will also be milliards of myriad Yakṣas coming from the ten directions of space, to guard such being who elucidates on its teaching. If there are those amongst them who have also listened in earnest and faith to the wonderful teaching of this sūtra, they will be delighted and immensely exulted.

The boundless magnitude of all those celestial beings in Jambudvīpa who gather together to listen to the elucidation of this teaching will all be rejoiced. Because of having listened to this excellent teaching, it enhances the vital energies and power of the bodies of these celestial beings, thus acquiring their respect-inspiring virtues.

At that time, having listened to these verses, the four celestial Monarchs said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Since long in the past, I have never heard of such excellent discourse concerning *nirvāṇa*. Having listened to it, my mind is mingled with joy and compassion, my snot and tears are interflowned, my entire body is shuddering, my limbs are felt like limbered up and so much delighted, and also become bristled with the inconceivable, boundless utter happines. We now make our venerated offerings by bestrewing the various regular and large ethereal maṇḍala flowers atop the Tathāgata. Having made such offerings, the four celestial Monarchs then told the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Each of the four monarchs of us has five hundred Yakṣas as our retinues, and we always would accompany the expounders of this sūtra, guarding them and the sūtra."

Chapter 7 : Sarasvatī Devatā

At that time, Sarasvatī divinity said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! To the bhikṣus and bhikṣuṇīs who provide elucidation to the teaching of this discourse, I would benefit them in their joyous pursuit of expounding significations of the contents with eloquence, and to render them observing closely sobriety and rigour [56] in the sequence of the passages that they will be

[56] The term "莊嚴" to be glossed as "adornment" is not a good fitting in this context. It appears to be a compound noun as "莊重嚴謹".

expounding, so that they will well acquire their great wisdom meritoriously. If there are important words in the passages which they negligently missed out or may have forgotten during their expositions [57], or they may have interpreted certain passages incorrectly as against their original meanings, I can make them rectifying those errors according to their sequence, and I can also do wonders to accord them the synopsised formulations of the rectified meanings of those passages or sentences so as they will not forget them. Suppose there were some beings who have planted their roots of virtues under the guidance of hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, expounders of the contents of this teaching are on par with them, who are able to explicate at length and circulate abroad this wondrous discourse in the regions of Jambudvīpa, in order that this vital teaching will not one day be discontinued and lost altogether. Furthermore, the bhikṣus and bhikṣuṇīs who expound and devoutly uphold this sūtra should make every endeavor to ensure that those numerous beings will in due course having the chance to listen to elucidation of the important contents of this sūtra, should do as best they can to ensure that all those beings will amass their incredible, vigorous and acute [58] great wisdom, and amass the immeasurable resultants of their merits of virtues. Also, they must exert to the utmost of their capacity to make sure that all those beings are able to understand well the underlying true meanings of the numerous various expedients of teaching, are able to acquire their unhindered eloquence in regard to all those doctrinal teachings, are able to become proficient in the various worldly skills of ethical professions, are able to break free from the unending round of birth and death, attaining ultimately the quality of non-backsliding, and so these beings will surely expeditiously attain *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi*."

Chapter 8 : Lakṣmī Devatā

At that time, Lakṣmī divinity said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! To those expounders of the teaching of this sūtra, I would provide them with the necessaries according to their basic needs as to clothing, food and drink, bedding, medicines, and those other means of sustaining livelihood, without having any scarcity, so that their minds can dwell undistractedly, and throughout day and night they can delightedly concentrate with the right mindfulness to reflect upon the discrete profound meanings of the phrases in this sūtra. Suppose there were some beings who have planted their roots of virtues under the guidance of hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, expounders of the contents of this sūtra are just as good as them, who are able to explicate at length and circulate abroad this wondrous discourse in the regions of

[57] Or also if there are very important missing words in their transcribed copies of the sūtra.

[58] It is mentioned as 捷利 in 《金光明最勝王經》instead of 猛利. The former compound noun means 敏捷銳利 whereas the latter can be rendered as 勇猛銳利.

Jambudvīpa, in order that this teaching will not one day go into extinction. All those beings who have earnestly listened to this sūtra, throughout the hundreds of thousands of millions *nayutāḥ* of aeons in the future, they will always be born in the celestial realms or as humans, are predestined to live with the multifarious forms of happiness, are able to meet with the Buddhas for their teaching and guidance so that they will ere long attain *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi*, and all those agonies in the three woeful realms of existence will be put to rest without a remainder.

World-Honoured One ! I have in my past life planted roots of virtues under the guidance of a Tathāgata with the titular epithet as Ratnakusuma-guṇasāgara-vaiḍūryakanakagiri-prabhāsaśrī, the Worthy One of Homage, the Perfect One in Omniscience, the Perfect One in Wisdom and Conducts, the Well-Gone One, the Wise Knower of the Secular World, the Unsurpassed One, the Peerless Trainer and Driver of Worldly Beings, the Buddha, the World-Honoured One [59]. It is thus for this reason that all this while I have been following the expounders of the teaching of this sūtra in wherever their thoughts are leveled at, following wherever their sights are leveled at, following any places they set foot in, and able to let the boundless numerous countless beings to live through all those happiness, be it clothing, food and drink, means of sustaining livelihood, or the seven kinds of precious jewels as gold, silver, pearls, lapis lazulis, etc, and the rarest corals, ambers, first-rate jades, rarer jades and cowries, without ever lacking them. If there are beings who can devoutly recite this wonderful golden-illumining sūtra, and which is also for my benefit if they can make venerated offerings to all those Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones, and while in paying their homage, they should also be thrice uttering my name. After making their offerings in reverence to the Buddhas, they should also separately make offering to me with incense, flowers, and various kinds of tasty foods, and later to strew them down in the different directions. By doing this, it must be known that these beings would be able to amass resources of wealth or other treasures. Furthermore, for this reason of making obeisances that gnomes and all those divinities will all be delighted, quality of the soil will then be improved, the planting of grains, sprouting and budding, growing of stalks, branches and leaves of crops, and the yielding of fruits will all be sufficiently nourished and flourish luxuriantly. Besides, the earthly deities of flora will also be delighted and the vegetation will surely see the growth and lush of various kinds of floral produces. At the same time, I too, as mindfully having compassion towards all those living beings, would always accord them the necessaries of livelihood they are needful of.

World-Honoured One ! In the northward direction from here at the domain

[59] Ten epithets of the Buddha in Sanskrit : *Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat* (or *Buddha-lokajyeṣṭha*).

of Vaiśravaṇa-devarāja, there is a city called Animaṇḍa, within which is a park by the name of Puṇyakusumaprabhā, and in this park is located a most extraordinary palace [60] called Survaṇadhvaja, which is made of seven kinds of jewels. This is the place where I often reside in. If anyone who wishes for his ventures to be profitable and proliferating, this person should first of all clean up his house and sprinkles his dooryard, courtyard, rooms, etc, with scented water, then takes a clean bathe, dons the white-coloured clean garment, rubs his body with fine perfume, and thereafter, which is also for my benefit, utters thrice in earnest name of the World-Honoured One — Ratnakusuma-guṇasāgara-vaiḍūryakanakagiri-prabhāsaśrī Bhagavat — then bows or prostrates in homage and makes offerings to Him, kindles incense, strews around the place with flowers. After that, he should also utter three times earnestly the name of this discourse — Suvarṇaprabhāsottama sūtra — then makes an august vow as he would to the Buddha in his utmost sincerity, and after that separately offers me incense, flowers, and various tasty foodstuffs, sprinkles around the place (with clean or scented water). At that time, this person should recite the synopsised phrases as below :

pratipūrṇa-pāre, samantadarśane, mahābihāragate, samantabedanagate, mahākāryapratiprāpaṇe, sattva-arthasamantānuprapure, āyāna-dharmatā mahābhogine, mahāmaitriupasaṃhite, hilaiṣi, saṃgrihīte, tesamartha-anupālani.

These dhāraṇic phrases are definitely propitious, true to its nature without falsehood, for which living beings whose standard are on par with that of the expounders of this sūtra, as well as those beings who are conformable with the middling level of spiritual roots of virtues [61], these beings should amenably uphold this dhāraṇī, should recite it, should penetrate it holistically without hurdles, should observe the eight prohibitory precepts [62] for seven days and nights straight, and with their mind purified from mornings to nightfalls, they need to make venerated offerings with incense and flowers to all those Buddhas throughout the ten directions of space [63]. By virtue of their merits thus acquired,

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[60] In this Chinese translated text, it is mentioned as 最勝園 whereas in 金光明最勝王經, it is translated as 勝殿. Both are not wrong. We have to think of it in the empyreal sense, not a terrestrial park within the earthly park that is made of the seven kinds of jewels. Of course, it is more explicit if it is mentioned as a palace or an abode.

[61] *Cf.* Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra, fascicle 83:「中善者，謂修行時，無有艱苦；遠離二邊，依中道行故。」

[62] 1. not to kill; 2. not to take things that are not given; 3. not to engage in sexual misconduct; 4. not to speak falsely; 5. not to imbibe liquor (nor taking drugs), 6. not to indulge in cosmetics, personal adornments, dancing, and music; 7. not to sleep on big cozy beds (but on a mat on the ground); 7. not to eat out of regulation hours (i.e. after noon).

[63] The process is optional depending on individuals. While observing abstinence during the period, one can also include making penitence of one's improprieties, or chanting names of the Buddhas, or reciting this dhāraṇī, or reciting this sūtra, or all of these in earnest.

they should always, for their own sakes as well as for the well-being of all those other sentient beings, dedicate the virtuous merits heretofore they have collected for the sake of their eventual realisation in completeness of *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi,* and make a wish thus, 'May all my supplications be propitiously fulfilled.' They should cleanse up their rooms and their houses of residence. Whether it is their own residential dwelling places or in hermitages, they should rub some scented soil on the floor or ground [64], kindle the fine incense, prepare a clean good seat, strew over the spot with the various flowers and perfumes, and patiently await my presence. Then all of an instant at that time, I will enter (unseen) in the room of the dwelling place, will sit on the seat that is provided, and from that very moment onwards, every day and night, I will render this dwelling place, whether it is town or a village, monastery or nunnery, or open fields, to be in sufficiency without lacking what are reasonably needed. And whether it is concerning money, gold, silver, other jewels, sheeps, cattles, paddies, or other grains, and so on, I will ensure all these sensibly and needful wishes be fulfilled, and accord them happiness. In addition, if they can also dedicate the most extraordinary part of the merits of their performed virtues to me, Lakṣmī divinity [65], I would stay close to them throughout their whole life, and whole-heartedly giving protection to them and their places of residence according to their supplications, and let all their wishes be fulfilled.

These beings concerned should always pay homage in earnest to all those Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, namely Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata, Vimalojjvalaratnasuvarṇabhāsaketu Tathāgata, SuvarṇabhāsaTathāgata, Suvarṇaśataraśmibhāsagarbha Tathāgata, Suvarṇa ratnākaracchatrakūta Tathāgata, Suvarṇapuṣpojjvalaraśmiketu Tathāgata, Mahāpradīpa Tathāgata, Ratnaketu Tathāgata. They should also pay homage earnestly to Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva, Suvarṇaprabhā Bodhisattva, Suvarṇagarbha Bodhisattva, Sadākaruṇā Bodhisattva, Dharmodgata Bodhisattva. They should also pay homage earnestly to Akṣobhya Tathāgata in the east, Ratnaketu Tathāgata in the south, Amitāyus Tathāgata in the west, Dundubhisvara Tathāgata in the north."

Chapter 9 : Dṛḍhapṛthivī Devatā

At that time, Dṛḍhapṛthivī divinity said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Regarding this wonderful golden-illumining sūtra, wherever it is, whether in this present world or in the worlds of future times, be it in communities of the cities or the villages, in places by the mountainside or by

[64] Or use it to draw a circle surrounding the spot of worshipping.

[65] Although the text doesn't mention about the accompanying retinues of Lakṣmī divinity, it should be understood as implying so as to dedicating a few of the best part of the acquired vurtuous merits to them as are similarly mentioned in those other chapters.

the marshes or in the open fields, in the royal palaces or in other residences, World-Honoured One ! I would follow to wherever this sūtra is being circulated, arrange a lion-seat at a spot on the ground, and do wonders for the dharmabhāṇaka to come to sit there on invitation, to elucidate at length this wonderful sūtra for others. Hereinto, I would always be the loyal guard for this dharmabhāṇaka, making myself invisible underneath his dharma-seat, and support him by the soles of his feet with my head. I will have taken in the unmatched ambrosia-alike flavour of the dharma teaching upon listening to the elucidation of this sūtra, thereby conduces to enhancing the strength of my body. By virtue of which, thus this great terra as deep as a hundred and sixty-eight thousand yojanas [66], from the innermost unbreakable core of earth up to lands above the ocean floors, all the different flavours of which will be sufficiently enhanced, and those lands will become fertile and profuse in produces much more than they are today. Therefore, in regions of Jambudvīpa, all those herbal plants, fruit trees, their roots and stalks, branches and leaves, blossoming and bearing fruits, all will be sufficiently nourished and profusely luxuriated, yielding fine looks and good tastes (of the agricultural produces). Living beings thus will be able to prolong their lifespans by consuming the healthful produces, will be safe with their bodily complexions and strength, will be effectively sound with their six cognitive senses, will have their countenance striking with sobriety and propriety that evince the distinctive aura of respect-inspiring virtues. When they are done with all these various advantages, they will always fulfill themselves well in their undertakings as they are possessed of great momentum in life, will be striving assiduously with valour and vigour.

World-Honoured One ! It is therefore living beings in the regions of Jambudvīpa feel secure and stable, are richly endowed and joyful, are prosperous. All those living beings are largely feeling happy in life most of the times, generally following the intentions of their mind as they delight in. As these living beings having acquired such great momentum in life, are thus capable of making offerings generously to this golden-illumining sūtra, and also are able to make obeisance and make the offerings of necessaries to the four groups of expounders who committedly uphold this sūtra, just then I would go over to where the respective expounders of dharma live, and truly for the sake of the blessings of all those sentient beings, to invite them (through some means) for elucidating at length this wonderful sūtra. Why do I do that ? World-Honoured One ! When the profound contents of this golden-illumining sūtra is being instructed, I, Dṛḍhapṛthivī, together with my retinues, will acquire the blessed merits much more than we usually do, which will wax our bodily strength and mentally enhance our valour and vigour.

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[66] Diameter of the earth is 12,756 Km, or about 7926 miles. Herein 168,000 yojanas would not fit in definition of depth of the earth. It seems like a transcriptional error, or perhaps it is originally meant to refer to its square measure.

World-Honoured One ! Once I have taken in the unmatched ambrosia-like flavour of the dharma teaching, the great terra in Jambudvīpa, by its aggregate ot the length and breadth of some seven thousand yojanas, is going to be increased in fertility copiously by many times more. World-Honoured One ! This great terra as reliant upon by the living beings, will thenceforth be able to grow multiplicatively all those things that they need. And when all those things that they require are fully grown and made available, they can be used by those living beings freely as they choose, and all of them will be happy. The various things like their foods and drinks, (materials for making) clothes, bed, bedding, residential houses, and palaces; timber logs, parks, rivers, ponds, wellsprings, and so forth of these kinds, all of them will become fully available as a result of the enriched great terra. World-Honoured One ! Therefore, all those beings must understand and be grateful to us, and should give such a thought to themselves thus, 'Assuredly, I would listen to this sūtra in earnest, to personally make obeisance and offerings, faithfully honour and extol it.' Once having given such a thought, they should set forth from their dwelling places, whether it is in the city or village, in the house or in an open field, just go over to the place where the teaching of this sūtra is being given. And after having listened to its elucidation and returned homes, they should go on to compliment amongst themselves, (common fellows of the Buddha's teaching,) and say thus to themselves, 'We presently have already listened to this profound, unparalleled, wonderful teaching, have gained for ourselves the inconceivable collection of virtuous merits, and in effect have met with those myriad Buddhas, by which we have gained emancipation from the resultants that would bound for the three woeful realms, and then in the hereafters we will always be born in the celestial realms, experiencing blissfulness.' If this group of living beings in their respective residential areas, were able to explain the teaching of this sūtra for others, so few as even only one simile, or one chapter, or one nidāna [67], and to praise honourably of even just the name of one Buddha or the name of just one saint Bodhisattva, or even just a single four-line verse, or to such a point of even just a phrase in this sūtra, and recite the original title of this sūtra, then World-Honoured One, in wherever places these beings live, their lands would be abounding with all what they need, and fertility of their lands would be much eclipsing that of all other farming lands. Whatever produces that grow out of their lands will stably wax, will be sufficiently nourished, will flourish luxuriantly, and those living beings will be rejoiced, will amass bountiful wealth and treasures, and thereby will be keen on performing the charitable giving, and reassuringly, their minds will then always remain resolute with deep faith towards the Triple Gems [68] ."

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[67] It refers to narrating about the provenance of either this sūtra as in its prolegomenon, or the conducive event that leads to the person's faithful learning of this sūtra, or the encouraging factors as promised by the celestial Monarchs and the chiefs of divinities.

[68] The 'Three Treasures' in Buddhism: the Buddha, His Dharma, and the Sanghas.

At that time, the Buddha told Dṛḍhapṛthivī divinity, "If there were beings, to such a point of having listened to merely the elucidated significations of a phrase in this golden-illumining sūtra, they would be born in their afterlife amongst the thirty-three heavens [69] freely as they choose for themselves. Pṛthivī divinity ! If there were beings, for the sake of making offerings in the name of this sūtra, have made imposing adornments to their residences, to such a point of having draped merely just one banner related to this sūtra, or just one canopy, or just one clothing (of kaṣāya), then six celestial palaces created of the six kinds of jewels would naturally appear in the respective six celestial realms in the sensuous sphere of existence, and these beings would be born there at the end of their lifespans. Pṛthivī divinity ! In these respective celestial palaces created of the six kinds of jewels, therein also would naturally appear fairies of the six respective realms, whom they can always have amusements with, enjoying the incredible wondrous blissfulness every day and night."

Just then, Dṛḍhapṛthivī divinity said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! It is for this reason that every time the bhikṣus (and bhikṣuṇīs) sat down on the dharma-seat, I have always guarded them throughout day and night without ever leaving; have made myself invisible beneath the dharma-seat, and supported the dharma-expounders by the soles of their feet with my head. World-Honoured One ! Suppose that there were beings who have planted their roots of virtues under the guidance of hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, expounders of the contents of this teaching would be just as good as them, who are able to explicate at length and circulate abroad this wondrous discourse in the regions of Jambudvīpa, so that this vital teaching will not one day become extinct. All those beings who have earnestly listened to the elucidation of this sūtra, in the future periods of hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ of myriad aeons, they will be born frequently in the celestial realms or as humans, will always live through blissfulness, will be able to meet with the Buddhas for their teachings, will be able to expeditiously attain *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi*, and those predestined agonies in the three woeful realms of existence will be put to rest altogether without a remainder."

Chapter 10 : Saṃjñeya Chief Mahāyakṣa and Groups of Yakṣas

At that time, Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa and the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others, stood up from their seats, drew the upper garment over their left shoulders, knelt on their right knee, (held their palms together respectfully) and said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Regarding this wonderful golden-illumining sūtra, in anywhere it is found, whether it is in the present world or

[69] Names of these thirty-three heavens that surround the main Trāyāstriṃśā heaven, are discretely mentioned in Saddharma-smṛty-upasthāna-sūtra, scroll 25. 《正法念處經》.

in other future worlds, and whether it is in communities of the cities or the villages, whether it is in places by the mountainside or by the marshes or in the open fields, whether it is in the royal palaces or in other residences, I and the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others would follow to wherever this sūtra is being circulated, going to the places where this sūtra is located, make ourselves invisible, commit ourselves to follow and guard the expounders of this sūtra in order that all those evils (of afflictions) that they may be beset with can be put to end, and so that they can concentrate with the peace of mind. As for the audience who comes to listen to the teaching of this sūtra, whether they are men or women, or boys and girls, with respect to what they truly comprehend about the teaching of this sūtra, or to such a point of having heard of just only the name of one Tathāgata or the name of just one saint Bodhisattva, or knowing only the original name of this sūtra by some of them, but individually, when they are able to accept it, recite and uphold it in their practices, I (and my retinue of Yakṣas) certainly would follow and attend upon them as the loyal guards for giving them protection, so that all those evils (of afflictions) that they may be troubled with can be dispelled, and their minds be secured with peacefulness. And concerning security of the capital of their nation, and the inner and outer city walls, regardless of whether are they are palace of the king and the residences, or the open territorial fields, we would also make the same commitment. World-Honoured One ! Why am I called Saṃjñeya, the chief commander of Yakṣas ? Certainly, World-Honoured One, I myself must personally bear testimony to my own spiritual realisation.

World-Honoured One ! I am aware of the nature of all those dharmas, the nature of all those dependently conditioned phenomena, and I clearly understand all dharmas (as means of expedient), clearly understand the distinctions between them, and I abide undistractedly in the nature of suchness of all phenomenal dharmas [70] , undefiledly embrace and accept all these dharmas as with all those other dharmas [71]. World-Honoured One ! I have attestedly beholden [72] the unimaginable brilliance of wisdom, the unimaginable torch of wisdom, the unimaginable deeds of wisdom, the unimaginable collection of wisdom, the inconceivable dharma-realm [73] of wisdom. World-Honoured One ! I have the correct understanding and right contemplations with regard to the significations of all those dharmas, have the

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[70] *sarva-dharma tathatā-svabhāva*.「一切法如性」

[71] being undefiled through non-differentiation-making and freed from desires and craving of one's own ego, understanding that the knowledge of all these and all other dharmas, all mundane and supramundane dharmas are not at variance with one another but are accepted as ultimately in harmony with one's true thusness of the pure Buddha-nature.

[72] 現見 (*darśayati*), is a term referring to a yogin who bears attestation to meditating the present events and circumstances in the secular world, by virtue of which he gains complete insight into the incredible wisdom as in his originally untainted true nature.

[73] 「智境」，境即境界，法境界，謂法界智。

right discernments, have the right understandings in respect of all phenomena of the nature of dependently conditioned originations, and have the true capability to fully comprehend the inherent nature of all dharmas. World-Honoured One ! It is for these reasons that I am denominated as Saṃjñeya, the chief commander of Yakṣas.

World-Honoured One ! I, Saṃjñeya, the chief commander, will render expounders of the teaching of this discourse to be endued with mien of sobriety and rigour while evincing the felicity of diction, and to be able to hold forth with eloquence unceasingly. I will also make flavours of the vital energies to enter bodies of the expounders of this teaching through their hair-pores, so as to wax their bodily strength and to boost the valour and vigour of their minds, so that they will be able to fulfill themselves with the incredible wisdom, and will always enter their thoughts with the shrewd, right mindfulness. All these kinds of things, I will render expounders of the teaching of this discourse to be fully fitted up with, to have their minds without weariness, to have their bodies experiencing qualities of the true sense of blissfulness, and to be rejoiced. It is for such intention to ensure that they are able to continue to illumine sentient beings with the teaching of this sūtra.

Suppose that there were beings who have planted their roots of virtues under the guidance of hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, the expounders of this teaching, for the benefits of all these beings, would elucidate at length and circulate abroad the teaching of this wonderful sūtra in the regions of Jambudvīpa, so that it will not be discontinued and becomes extinct one day. After those numerous sentient beings have listened to and comprehended well the teaching of this sūtra, they would acquire for themselves the unimaginable collections of wisdom, would gather in the inconceivable collections of virtuous merits, and in the future worlds throughout the hundreds of thousands of myriad aeons, they will be born frequently in the celestial realms or as humans. And in those future worlds, they will be able to meet the Buddhas for their teachings, will be able to attain *anuttara-samyaksaṁbodhi* before long, and those predestined agonies in the respective three woeful realms of existence will be permanently put to rest without a remainder.

I pay homage to Ratnakusuma-guṇasāgara-vaiḍūryakanakagiri-prabhāsaśrī Tathāgata, Arhat, Asmyak-saṃbuddha. I pay homage to Śākyamuni Tathāgata, Arhat, Asmyak-saṃbuddha, who is abound with hundreds of thousands of milliards of nayutāḥ, myriad exquisite bodily adornments, who has kindled such wonderful dharma-torch. I pay homage to Lakṣmī Mahādevatā, paramount in the august virtues and the fulfillment of virtues. I pay homage to Sarasvatī Mahādevatā, of the inconceivable wisdom in the fulfillment of merits of virtues. [74] “

[74] This paragraph of phrases in paying homage to the supreme and exalted Ones should be recited thrice in namaste, so as to be in accord with what is mentioned in Chapter 8.

Chapter 11 : The True Teaching

At that time, the Buddha told Dṛḍhapṛthivī divinity, "There was a king in the past by the name of Balendraketu. He had a son called Ruchiraketu, who would soon be consecrated in an investiture to assume the kingship, to command and lead the kingdom. At that time, the king said to his son, Ruchiraketu, "There is a true doctrinal text in this world which is good for ruling a kingdom. I was too a prince in the past, and also would not long before succeeding to the throne. Just then the king held the copy of doctrinal text in his hand and said to his son : I reigned the kingdom in reliance on this doctrinal text for some twenty thousand years [75], and I have not for a moment conducted myself unlawfully in contrary to its teaching, and with regard to matters of sentiment towards my own's kindred, I have not ever had the strong attachment to love." What is about this true text for ruling a kingdom in this world ?

Dṛḍhapṛthivī divinity ! At that time, King Balendraketu told prince Ruchiraketu in verses :

> I shall now explain about the true doctrinal text for the kings, for the benefits of all sentient beings, for dispelling their doubts and delusions. All kings of the people and the heavenly kings of all those celestial realms should be joyful about hearing this, should hold your palms together in respect and listen closely.
>
> Once all those celestial kings have gathered together, assembled at a place in the mountain ranges of Vajrākara, just then the world-guarding four celestial Monarchs stood up and asked these questions to Lord Mahā-Brahma :
>
> The honourable great teacher, Mahā-Brahma, being endued with the unrestrained easefulness amongst all the celestial Lords, capable of dispelling the doubts and delusions of others, and please dispel the same of ours. That is, why a king as human is given the name *deva*? Why a king of the people is also called *devaputra* ? Is it because he is born amongst humans, lives in the palace, but who reign the kingdom with the true teaching that he is being called deva ?

[75] This was during the time in the immediately preceding regular aeon of Jambudvīpa (*vyūha-kalpa*) where beings lived up to the lifespan of 20,000 years. That was the period during which Kāśyapaḥ Buddha appeared in the world. Beings now live up to about 100 years are presently in the *bhadra-kalpa*, the 9th regular aeon of the second phase of the four middling aeons of formation, habitation, degeneration, and annihilation of the world. Śākyamuni Buddha appeared in our world in this 9th regular aeon. In the next *nakṣatra-kalpa*, beings will live up to 80,000 years, and during the initial period of that period, Maitreya Buddha will appear in this world, some 5.76 billion years away from now. A regular aeon has the period of about 16.8 billion earth-years. Thenceforward, there will only be Buddhas appear in the regions of Jambudvīpa in the 15th and 20th regular aeon.

After the world-guarding four celestial Monarchs have made such queries, just then the honourable great teacher, Mahā-Brahma, replied them in verses :

Although you have presently asked me concerning the meanings of them, I should, rather for the sake of all sentient beings, elaborate and promulgate the paramount, superlative doctrinal teaching. It is because of the person's accumulation of his excellent resultants of the blessed merits that he is born amongst human beings as a king, then to reign and lead his kingdom is therefore he is called a king of the human beings.

When a king of the humans is inside his mother's womb, he is being protected by all those devas, and even before he enters into the mother's womb, he is also being given the protection by those devas. Although he is born as a king amongst humans, but because his is guarded by the devas, is therefore he is also called the *devaputra*. Also, because respective gods of the thirty-three heavens have also given a portion of their collections of the virtuous merits to this human king, is therefore he is also called the *devaputra*.

Because a king is supported by the supernormal power of those celestial gods, is the reason why he has the august idiosyncrasy of such unrestrained easefulness; is able to keep far away from the wicked factors of thoughts so that he would inhibit similarly his subjects from bringing forth the evil thoughts and deeds; and is able to abide in peace with regard to all thoughts and deeds of virtue so that he would practise it for building it up so as to have the widespread effect. This king is thus able to capacitate human beings to born frequently in heavens in their afterlife.

A king is partly called monarch of the people, is partly also called the supreme one who keeps firmly to blissfulness of the masses, who can inhibit all those evil deeds, including that by the rākṣasas, deathsmen, and the like. He is partly also called a parent who teaches the people to practise and cultivate virtues, to reveal to them the cause-effect of virtuous and abominable resultants, who is therefore guarded by the devas. He also explains to the masses regarding the virtuous and evil actions that they have done, and whether in the present or other future lifetimes, they are bound to go through the consequential effects as they manifest in due course, is therefore this king is guarded by the devas.

If there are wicked deeds occurred in the regions of a king, and he simply connives, turning a blind eye to them, does not mete out punishment to wrongdoers for their crimes, does not make effort to

edify his subjects with teaching of the right ethics, but instead ditches the moral teaching while enhancing those woeful destines, and as a result the regions are swarmed with deceptions [76], conflicts, and so on. Respective gods of the thirty-three heavens are enraged because this king connives at those acts of wickedness and has done nothing to effectively govern them.

As the right teaching for the kingdom is ruined, it causes acts of deviousness and fraudulence to prevail, effectuating the opportunity for the hostile foreign armies to encroach on the territories and pillage all they could. Brigands and thieves too come to rob the money and treasures in the people's homes.

A king has the duty to reign his kingdom according to the right teaching, and should not wrongly conduct himself which begets all such horrible things. But if indeed he does go on to conduct himself in such unbeseeming way, his kingdom is doomed to be ruined altogether.

And it will be likened to elephants on the rampage which trample on all those lotuses in the pond, like the gale which comes all of a sudden, like the devastating downpour which occurs over and over again, like the unpropitious constellations that often happen, like the sun and moon which appear much out of radiance, like the varieties of grains and fruit trees which are all unnourished and not growing.

Because the king forsakes the right teaching to reign, his kingdom becomes mired in famine. Gods in their celestial palaces are aware and they are worried and upset about it, all because this king is tyrannical and ruthless, does not practise deeds of virtues.

The world-guarding celestial Monarchs then said to each other :

This king engages in the evils of mind, and favours keeping company with the elements of wickedness. Because he sticks at nothing to do his ways of wickedness, soon all those celestial gods are infuriated. Because the gods are incensed, before long his kingdom will decline and will be overthrown and defeated as he unlawfully deployed armies (to oppress masses and invade other regions), as well as adversities such as duplicity, fraudulence, provocations, disputes, plagues, malignant diseases, all will be brought on to inflict upon his kingdom.

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[76] The archaic term "姦" has been used six time in this chapter. It does not refer to "rapes". It just means "奸詐" or "欺詐".

Just then, King Balendraketu continued saying :

All those devas will leave this king forthwith, to let his kingdom be withered away and collapse, and he will begin to go through great worries and anguishes. His brothers and sisters, wives and kindred, one by one they will become homeless and separated from him, and will even be met with unforeseeable deaths.

Meteors will be seen falling down on the region. The sight of two suns will manifest. The hostile enemies of other regions will encroach on his territory and plunder rampantly. The masses will suffer disastrous hunger, and epidemics abound. His highly valued Prime Minister will desert him or meet with an inexorable death. His conveyances of elephants and horses for carrying him around, all of a sudden, all will soon be dead.

Sources of wealth and treasures belonging to the nation and homes of individuals will be plundered by the people amongst themselves, and many will be slain by arms. The five planets and other asterisms will deviate from their regularities. Pestilence and deadly diseases will be widespread across the national territory.

Those imperially favoured high rankings of ministers and officials will become good at corrupt activities. All such acts of wickedness are simply to be also given special royal treatment, whereas cases of ministers and officials who would carry out their duties conscientiously in accordance with the practice of morality are fast on the wane as days go by.

As the king wilfully accords honour to his officials who carry out illegitimate activities (either for themselves or on orders), but does not care to acknowledge selectively those who practise morality, is therefore three different calamitous things will come about in regions of the world.

Asterisms will err out of their regularities, and gale and heavier torrent will descend, destroying original fertility of the lands, lives of humans and other creatures along with the nectar-like unparalleled truths of teaching. As the king honours and advocates people of ignobleness and vileness, and vilifies those who truthfully practise morality, is therefore hail will be showering down from firmament, famine and plague will be rife, varieties of grains and fruits will decline in nutrients and flavours, beings falling ill will be seen everywhere in the region.

The luxuriant harvest of the sweet and refreshing fruits will be dwindling day by day, and conversely, insipidness and unpalatable flavours of the variety of fruits will be on the rise as days draw on. The originally endearing places of sceneries for having amusement and fun will have their greeneries all shrivelled up, leaving no more enjoyable sights.

The fine taste of crops and food that are regularly consumed by the people will slowly be reducing and losing the vital nutrients, add not to florid but the pallid complexions. Their countenance will look unattractive, and bodies will be emaciated, lacking physical strength. Whatever and however much they eat, they will not be gratifyingly satisfied. They will lose their vital energy, strength, and vigour. Laziness and slothfulness will become common throughout the region. Lots of people will be oppressed by the agonies of being stricken by illnesses. There will be very bad changes caused by the unpropitious constellations. There will also be many rākṣasas going on the rampage.

If a king conducts himself illicitly, is partisan, and encouraging the company of the elements of wickedness, doing disservice to well-beings of human beings and devas, then it will bring more agonies to those who will have to suffer in the three woeful realms of existence.

The happenings of these numerous misfortunes are attributed to the craving and fixation of this king in dealing with his kindred and officials, who simply connives at their evil wrongdoings, and prefers to just ignore them and doing nothing to set them right about their misdeeds. If a king was truly anointed and protected by the gods before he was born to assume the throne later on, this king shall not be undergoing all these misfortunes all along.

An existing king who regularly practise deeds of virtues will be born in heavens in the afterlife. An existing king who doesn't cease to carry out immoral acts will be born amongst the three woeful realms of existence after the end of his lifespan.

Scorching heat will be felt by the gods in in the thirty-three heavens because kings of the humans (whom they have sanctified) continue to connive at all those evil wrongdoings, neglecting their duties to redress what evidently should be put right, and thus are turning their backs on the order and expectation of gods as well as that of their parents. They are not the dutiful sons of gods and their parents, for they cannot reign their kingdoms according to the true teaching.

It is by virtue of which that it has brought about all those fraudulences and evil corruptions by their kindreds and others which jeopardise (the stability and progress of) the kingdoms. The kings should not connive at those lawbreakers, but must make sure that they are to be brought to justice, and to mete out the deserved punishments to them. It is therefore the gods, devas, and Yakṣas will protect and support these kings who reign to crack down on all those evil wrongdoings.

Because a king practises virtues by reigning his kingdom with the true moral teaching in the present world, his kingship will be fortified as a result of his increased blessed merits. He should give advices regularly to his subjects about the implications of performing the virtuous acts and wicked acts. And it is exactly because he has been able to demonstrate to the people about the law of cause and effect in relation to virtuous acts and wicked acts that he was vested upon the kingship.

When a king, for his own benefit as well as for the well-being of his subjects and others, consistently reign his kingdom by following the true teaching of morality, not only that he will be given protection and support by all those gods and devas, but he will also be getting the assistance from the neighbouring kings.

When there are elements within communities of the region whose actions place (the unity and progress of) the kingdom in jeopardy, they must be given the true instructions of morality. For their own kismets and destiny of the kingdom, masses, and the king alike, must practise the right ways of morality, and must not engage in the wicked corruptive acts. All acts of wickedness should not be ignored or condoned, and when compliance is assured, all other things else will not be able to ruin his kingdom.

The main cause is mostly ascribed to the corruptive fraudulences of beings, and later their unlawful acts will fail when they are brought to light and justice of law. If fraudulent practices have become commonplace across the region, it will ruin the kingdom in the long run, just like a flock of elephants which before long will trample on all those lotuses in the pond, ruining them all.

When (the king, or the masses, being unscrupulous, unappeasable, unrepentant,) resentfully repine at divinities for the adversities they suffer, is why the gods, devas, and Yakṣas are irritated and angry, that all those misfortunes are happening, and regions of the kingdom are full of disasters. That is why the king must follow the true

teaching of morality to reign his kingdom, to transform destiny of the kingdom by way of virtues, and must not accommodatingly acquiesce to those corruptive wicked ways of people, even if it means at the expense of his own life.

A king who follows the true moral teaching should not show special favour to his own kindred, and to all those related or unrelated to him, he should always be fair-minded. He should strive to integrate unbiasedly all those related or unrelated into one unified wholeness of harmonious subjects. Appellation of this king as a true practitioner of the teaching of morality will then be well disseminated across all those heavens in the three spheres of existence.

When a kingdom is ruled in accordance with the true teaching of morality, masses in its regions will mostly practise virtues. They will always look upon their king admirably with the wholesome minds, and at the same time all those devas and Yakṣas will also be fully saturated with wholesomeness in their minds. It is hence by relying upon the true teaching of morality to reign the kingdom that this person is then fit to be called a monarch of the people.

Then all those gods, devas, and Yakṣas will go on to guard such monarch of the people, in the same way as the parents who unreservedly guard their good son. It is because of this that the sun, the moon, the five planets, and the other constellations, they would revolve according to their distinctions without getting into any irregularities. And so, winds and rains follow timely with the seasons, natural disasters are nowhere to be seen, the kingdom will become substantially well off, the people will live happily and prosper, and all of which benefit both the masses and also the guarding divinities.

It is for this reason that the king and others (as the high-ranking officials) must not do or even tolerate corruptive acts of wickedness, even if it means putting their own life in the gravest danger. They must not forsake the true teaching of morality which is comparable to a priced treasure.

Because the valued treasure regarded of the true teaching of morality can bring about true happiness for the masses at large, the king should draw himself closer to, promote or retain those (ministers and officials) who truthfully practise the true teaching of morality. With the accumulations of blessed merits being assured in this respect, it will much adorn his royal prestige.

As for the king's kindred, they must be taught to learn to know when and where to stop, and appreciate contentment with their gained lots (with regard to their craving for things). They must steer clear of those having the wicked minds, and at the same time to amend and overcome their own shortcomings [77] . The king must settle his subjects down on the needful practice of morality, to edify them about the need for keeping their minds closely guarded as to detachment from wickedness. Therefore, in this way, his subjects will be able to live peacefully, prosperously, happily, and this king will also be imbued with much august virtues.

Following what his subjects have transgressed the rule of law accordingly, their wickedness must be subdued by rehabilitating them with the right teaching in accord with morality. In doing so, this king would acquire for himself prestigious reputation, who is able to guard the generations of beings for their true happiness.

Chapter 12 : Susaṃbhava Cakravartiraja

At that time, the Tathāgata, for relating the causal factors and conditions of his past life to Pṛthivī divinity, said in verses :

I was once a Cakravartiraja [78] in the past, who was able to forsake to a greater extent of even the four continents and the seas surrounding them that were under my sovereignty. Also, during that time, I had made offerings to the Buddhas with all the priced treasures collected from the four continents. All those offerings that I had made, they were amongst the exceedingly valuable things, and not the least of which was still endearing to me that I had not really willingly wanted to relinquish. In the numerous past aeons of my past lives, for the reason of seeking after (an ultimate awakening [79] to) the true teaching that I had gone to such extent as even sacrificing my own life.

Also, in the bygone era of myriad aeons, there was a Buddha, World-Honoured One, by the name of Ratnaśikhin. In the period after the parinirvāṇa of this Buddha, World-Honoured One, there appeared in that world a Cakravartiraja called Susaṃbhava, who had such spirit

[77] The Chinese term "修治" can be understood as 修複療治.

[78] A dharma-wheel-turning sagely monarch. When a Cakravartiraja appears in the world of Jambudvīpa, it will the period wherein lifespan of beings last up to 84,000 years.

[79] The term "求" has the underlying signification of "求證". Indeed, in Survaṇabhāsottama-sūtrendrarāja-sūtra, it is mentioned as "seeking after the *dhamakāya*" of Buddahood.

of unrestrained easefulness in his reign of the four continents up to the bounds of those surrounding oceans.

There was a city of this Cakravartiraja called Jinendraghoṣā, wherein he lived and reigned to inhibit all those acts of wickedness for edifying and spiritually transforming his subjects. Once in his dream at night, he heard about the teaching concerning the merits of virtues of the Buddha, and then in the dream he saw a bhikṣu called Ratnoccaya, who was able to make known explicitly the true teaching of the Tathāgata, that is, the golden-illumining, profound and wonderful sūtra. The brilliance emitting from this sūtra was bright as the midday sun, able to shine everywhere.

The Cakravartiraja, having woken up from the dream, he sought an awakening of it forthwith, and felt the joy all over the body. Then he left his palace to go over to the place of this bhikṣu. Over there he made the offerings and paid respect to those sagely bhikṣus, and asked those honourable ones : “Is there a bhikṣu called Ratnoccaya in this assembly, who is accomplished in all those requisite virtuous merits ? “

At that time, bhikṣu Ratnoccaya was in a cave, sitting motionless and unperturbed, with his mind in right mindfulness, reciting the golden-illumining sūtra. Just then there was a bhikṣu who came over to this monarch, brought him to the place of bhikṣu Ratnoccaya. At that time, bhikṣu Ratnoccaya was still in the cave. He was seen with a remarkable countenance, beaming with much awe-inspring virtue.

The bhikṣu then said to this monarch, “This person in the cave is bhikṣu Ratnoccaya whom you have asked about. He is capable of upholding the very profound, that which is practised by all Buddhas, called the golden-illumining sūtra, the most pre-eminent amongst all those sūtras.

Just then, Susaṃbhava monarch straight away paid obeisance to bhikṣu Ratnoccaya, and said thus, “Face of the Honourable One is like the full moon, beaming with the august virtue, and may thou kindly elaborate for me the golden-illumining sūtra, the paramount of all those sūtras.

At that time, bhikṣu Ratnoccaya accepted the invitation by Susaṃbhava monarch for explaining to him about the golden-illumining sūtra.The gods and devas in the three thousand times the great trichiliocosm of world systems knew about the explication in the offing, were all rejoiced.

The monarch then chose a clean, fresh and fine place, arranged to have an assortment of the rare precious stones laid on the ground, spread around it with the scented water, and strewed around the place with fragrant flower petals.

At that time, the monarch personally arranged the dharma-seat, draped the silken fabrics of banners and canopies, and tied them with the decorative tassels. He then strewed upon the raised huge dharma-seat with the various kinds of special and wonderful fragrant wood-powders [80] . All those devatās, celestial nāgas, mahoragas, kiṃnaras, and many others, also showered down the heavenly maṇḍala flowers, strewing around the dharma-seat, covering all over the place.

Then there were the inconceivable hundreds of thousands of millions nayutāḥ of myriad celestial Kings and their retinues, all came at the same time, gathered at this place of dharma teaching. At that time, as bhikṣu Ratnoccaya has walked out of the cave, all those divinities immediately strewed down the heavenly Śāla flowers in offering to this bhikṣu. Just then, having his body cleanly washed and donned the clean fine garment, bhikṣu Ratnoccaya went straight to the dharma-seat,. As he approached the raised dharma-seat, he held his palms together and made obeisance to it.

All those celestial Kings and devatās showered down maṇḍala flowers, the larger maṇḍala flowers, the large mañjūṣaka flowers, and many other kinds of wonderful flowers. There were numerous various sorts of musical instruments appeared in the space above, striking up the musical sounds all by themselves.

Bhikṣu Ratnoccaya, the dharmabhāṇaka, went up to the raised dharma-seat, seated upon it cross-legged with the soles upward. At once, he uttered [81] in homage to the inconceivable, innumerable hundreds of thousands of milliards of Buddhas in the ten directions of space. Therein he brought forth a great compassion for all those sentient beings, for all those masses under the command of Susaṃbhava monarch, as well as for all sentient beings in all the places of the farthest bounds to which the rays of the sun and moon can possibly reach. Then the dharma-preacher proclaimed and expounded this wonderful sūtra for Susaṃbhava monarch.

At that time, for listening to the dharma, the great monarch stood with his palms held together before bhikṣu Ratnoccaya. Having

[80] The common ones are aloewood (or agalloch wood) and sandalwood.

[81] It is better to interpret the single term “念” as “稱念”.

listened to core meanings of the true teaching afterwards, the monarch gave extolment of it as being exceedingly superb. His mind was overcome with grief (at the thought of all sentient beings in saṃsāra), and he was seen tears and snot interflowed. Then immediately he became gladdened, his mind becoming harmoniously cheerful. As he intended to make an offering in the name of this wonderful sūtra, he then held up his greatest wish-realising cintāmaṇi-ratna, made a great invocation for those beings :

"May today in my regions in this Jambudvīpa be showering down the myriad scarce and precious, magnificent and rarest seven kinds of jewels, and also a mix of other wonderful precious stones. By virtue of this, it will allow the countless all those beings to go through happiness."

Forthwith at that time, the sky showered down many of those seven kinds of jewels, and many other precious decorative items, including celestial crowns and earrings, the varieties of assorted precious stones, and also fine foods and drinks, jewelled seats and so on, and the four continents reigned by this monarch were fully filled with all these things as wished.

Susaṃbhava monarch later arranged for the countless of these seven kinds of jewels and so on that were fully abound in the four continents of his reign, to be given to those needy in the Order of Ratnaśikhin Buddha, and as venerated offerings to be made to the triple gems (of names of the Buddhas, their teachings, and Sanghas).

The bhikṣu who had given elucidation of the teaching to the monarch at that time was the presently existing Akṣobhya Buddha. Susaṃbhava monarch who listened to and upheld that teaching was me, presently as Śākyamuni Buddha.

I had at that time predeterminedly resolved to have those rare precious treasures that the great terras of the four continents would possibly be filled with, to be given as generous offerings, so that indeed I was able to listen in earnest to this golden-illumining sūtra. And having listened intently to the teaching of this sūtra, single-mindedly commended of it as exceptionally good, and thereby on account of such virtuous root and virtuous action that I later was able to bear testimony to the realisation of this golden-hued body that is blessed with a hundred kinds of sublime merits of virtues, which are always a delight to be seen by the boundless hundreds of thousands of millions of milliards of living beings and other kinds of beings, and those beings are always not satiated after beholding them once

or many times.

In the past ninety-nine hundred million aeons [82], I had always been a Cakravartiraja. Also, in the past hundreds of thousands of myriad aeons, I had always been a monarch who ruled those many smaller regions. And too in the inconceivable past aeons, I had always been Śakra-devānāmindra and Mahā-Brahma. I had also been able to meet with those World-Honoured-Ones who were completely accomplished with the ten powers of Tathāgata, and the number of whom are just countless.

So is regarding the boundless merits of virtues that I have attained, are attributed to having listened to discourses of the Buddhas, spontaneously commended about their teachings (and practised perfectly of what had been taught). Just as I have resolved myself for realising the perfect enlightenment of the true dharmakāya (of Tathāgatahood), I have fullfiled it in this life.

Chapter 13 : Protection by Devatās, Yakṣas, and other Amanuṣyas

The Buddha said to Lakṣmī divinity, "If a virtuous man or a virtuous woman who desires to make wonderful offerings of the inconceivable means of resources, in dedication to all those Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones of the past, present, and future ages, and also wishes to understand well the extremely profound locus of mental functioning of Buddhas [83] of the three periods, then this person must in earnest go to where this sūtra is being taught and circulated, whether it is in the city or in the village, in the private house or in an open field, to listen to this profound and wonderful sūtra whole-heartedly, with an undistracted right mindfulness."

At that time, the Buddha intended to recapitulate the main points of this sūtra, said in verses :

If someone desires to make venerated offering to all those Buddhas as well as wishes to know well the locus of mental functioning of all Buddhas of the three ages, the person should go to wherever this sūtra is being taught, be it in city, village, or other places, to listen to this wonderful sūtra in earnest.

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[82] 一億 in Chinese is the equivalent of 100 million.

[83] Mahāprajñā-sūtra, fascicle 575: 甚深般若波羅蜜多是「甚深行處」 **...** 如是行處非一切乘之所行處。所以者何？如是行處無名、無相、非所分別 **...**

This sūtra is inconceivable in its profound meanings, which begets immeasurable brinies of merits of virtues, is capable of rendering all sentient beings be liberated by permanently putting to end of their endless seas of sufferings which are inextricably bound up with (the stubborn perceptive views of) substantiality.

This sūtra is greatly profound, the virtuous states as demonstrated in the beginning, middle, and ending parts of it are indescribable, are incomparable by analogies. Even if by descriptions of the total grain-sands that are in the Ganges river, total motes of dust of the great terra, total volume of water in all the oceans, the total magnitude of all the mountains, and other examples of things like this, none of these quantifiable things can bear comparison to its profundity in the qualities of virtues.

If a person were able to gain insight into the profundity of this sūtra, then this person would have similarly gained insight into the nature of the reality of all dharmas [84]. And if this person were also able to abide imperturbably in the profound *dharmatā*, then such a person would have already seen me, Śākyamuni Buddha, in regard to the teaching of this golden-illumining sūtra.

For the inconceivably myriad asaṅkhya aeons in the future, this person will always be born amongst humans and divinities, and will always go through blissfulness (in true practices) on account of this person's excellent capability in comprehending with faith the profound teaching of this sūtra after listened to it. So is the boundless, inconceivable collection of the merits of virtues will thus have been realised by this person.

According to where this sūtra is being taught, whether it be a hundred or so yojanas away, and even within the distance are fires blazing all along the way, this person who sets forth to the place should untroubledly strive to cross past them. When he arrives at the village or the desolated hermitage [85] where the teaching of this sūtra is being expounded, he should listen to it in earnest.

Because this person listened to the explication of this sūtra intently and in earnest, adversities such as nightmares, sorceries, the variable disasters occurring as a consequence of irregularities of the five planets and other constellations, and other kinds of misfortunes will

[84] The term "法性" or *dharmatā* in Sanskrit, has the same signification as the other terms — *dharmakāya*, *dharmākara* (or *dharmakośa*), *tathāgatagarbha*, *bhūtatathatā*, *buddhatā*, and many others.

[85] *Sanskrit*: *āraṇyāyatana*.

all be averted utterly by this person.

The dharmabhāṇaka who sits on the lotus-throne at the place of dharma preaching, who either expounds this sūtra, or recites this sūtra, or writing it down, then after this dharmabhāṇaka has come down from that throne, (or has left for another place), during that time and later on, the form of this dharmabhāṇaka sitting on that throne miraculously will still be seen at times by the people.

By the same account of this dharmabhāṇaka, other miraculous forms like that of the Buddha, World-Honoured One, or the images of other Buddhas, or images of the Bodhisattvas like Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Maitreya Bodhisattva, and the forms of other Bodhisattvas will also manifest at times on that throne. Having seen all these various miraculous manifestations of forms, (this person as in the aforesaid) slough them off right away, with no different than he was before. [86]

All those Buddhas always would praise the person for having realised such awesome virtuous merits — who will be endowed with the countenance and appearance evincing the endless august virtues; will be given the great appellation as being capable of avoiding the adversaries; will be capable of repulsing the foreign hostile invaders; will be valiant and excessively powerful, whose defence of armed forces will be capable of breaking through the frontier of formidable enemies; and the distresses of fearsome nightmares attributable to all those numerous past evil deeds and all other such wicked deeds, will be completely put to end.

If this person, (being the king and commander in chief,) is forced into war, he will always triumph over his rivals. His celebrated name will be spread abroad all over the regions of Jambudvīpa. Moreover, he will be capable of subduing all those inimical enemies in terms of detaching themselves from all evil deeds, and making good efforts to practise virtuous deeds. As he constantly appears victorious in the physical and psychological warfares, he is always joyful.

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[86] How so ? The *dharmakāyas* of Buddhas and great Bodhisattvas cannot be seen by our naked eyes, and as explained in the Prājñāpāramitā-sūtra thus:「凡所有相，皆是虛妄。若見諸相非相，則見如來。若取法相、非法相，即著我人眾生壽者。以無我無人眾生壽者相見，修一切善法，則得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。」「實無有法，佛得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。如來所得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，於是中無實、無虛。」Hence, these miraculously manifested forms of the great sages, albeit being the expedient means for encouraging the ordinary beings, are essentially illusory and unreal, and the awakened ones would not be fixated on any of them.

Lord Mahā-Brahma, (Lord Śakra-devānāmindra and) Gods of the thirty-three celestial heavens, the four world-guarding Mahārājakāyika, Vajrapāṇi, those leaders of the Yakṣas, Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa as the great commander of Yakṣas, Dhyānaketu Mahāyakṣa, as well as Kiṃnararāja, Anavatapta Nāgarāja, Sāgara Nāgarāja, Asurarāja, Garuḍarāja, Sarasvatī Devatā, and Lakṣmī Devatā — all these celestial leading chiefs and their groups of divinities always would make their reverential offerings (to the Buddhas at the dharma-assembly). And they would give rise to the incredible perceptions towards those dedicated dharma-listeners as if seeing the dharmatā-stūpa. All those celestial beings who behold this will pay their respect, and they all will be rejoiced.

All those celestial Lords and Chiefs will also ponder and say to each other thus, 'We shall let these dedicated living beings henceforward to succeed in realising their boundless august virtues.'

If there are those who can come to the dharma-assembly, these are the ones who will one day accomplish with their superior roots of virtues. If there are those, in order to listen to this extremely profound sūtra, set forth to the concerned place of dharma-assembly, and in whom arise the inconceivable true faith to uphold the teaching, pay their homage by making offerings in the name of the stūpa of unsurpassed dharmatā, these are the people who would be able to benefit sentient beings with their great compassion, are the valued vessels for the boundless expedients of profound teaching, who are able to insightfully penetrate the extremely profound, unsurpassed dharmatā.

To those who are able to listen to this sūtra with the pure mind, they indeed are the ones who have made offerings to the hundreds of thousands of myriad Buddhas in the past ages. By virtue of their remarkable roots of virtues and for the myriads of good reasons going forward, they should again listen attentively to this golden-illumining sūtra and devoutly uphold it. This sort of beings will always be taken care of and guarded by the myriad celestial kings and divinities.

Sarasvatī divinity, Lakṣmī divinity, the four world-guarding Celestial Monarchs, the mighty Yakṣas, and the myriads of other Yakṣas would come from the four directions to guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and also uphold it, throughout day and night, to ensure that they would not be stricken by disasters and to be permanently free from those agonies.

Lord Śakra-devānāmindra; Lord Soma, Lord Yāma, Vāyu divinity, Varuṇa divinity and other divinities, Skanda divinity; Lord Viṣṇu, Sarasvatī divinity; Lord Īśvara, Hutāśana divinity and many other divinities — mightily and full of valour and vigour, would come to this world to guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and also uphold, throughout day and night without fail.

The Herculean Chiefs of Yakṣas, Nārāyaṇa divinity, Lord Maheśvara, the Twenty-eight Groups of Yakṣas and other Yakṣas with Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa as their chief commander, and the hundreds of thousands of myriads of Yakṣas, with their supernatural prowess and great strength, would vigorously guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and also uphold it, to free them from all terrors.

Vajrapāṇi divinity – great Chief of the Yakṣas, together with the retinue of five hundred Yakṣas, all of whom are forms transformed by the Mahābodhisattvas, would tirelessly guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and uphold it.

Maṇibhadra — another great Chief of the Yakṣas, and Pūrṇabhadra, Kumbhīra, Ātavaka, Piṅgala, Kapila, each of these Chiefs has the respective retinue of five hundred Yakṣas, would unwearyingly guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and uphold it.

Amanuṣyas that include Citrasena, Asurarāja, Gandharvas, and also Nārarāja, Jinarṣabha, Maṇikaṇṭha, and also Nikaṇṭha, Varṣādhipati, Mahāgrāsa, Mahākāla, Svarṇakeśa, Pāñcika, and also Chagalapāda, Mahābhāga, Mahārddhika Praṇālin, Dharmapāla, Magavala, Markaṭa, Vāli, Sūciroma, Sūryamitra, Ratnakeśa, Mahāpraṇālin, and likewise Nakula, Kāmaśreṣṭha; and also other great deities like Candana, Nāgayana, Haimavata, Sātāgirista, Aṅgulimālya, and so on myriads of them, with their supernatural prowess and great strength, always would guard the persons who listened closely to this profound and wonderful sūtra and uphold it.

Amanuṣyas including Anavatapta Nāgarāja, Sāgara Nāgarāja, Elapatra Nāgarāja, Mucilinda Nāgarāja, Nanda Nāgarāja, and this kind of other Nāgarājas, together with hundreds of thousands of other Nāgas, with great supernatural powers, always would come to guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and uphold it, day and night unfailingly.

Other Amanuṣyas like Bali, Rāhu, Namuci, Vemacitra, and likewise Saṃvara, Prahrāda, and also Kharaskandha and so on, all of them are Asurarājas, with the great supernatural powers, always would

come to guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and uphold it, day and night without fail.

Hāritī bhūtamātā and others, along with her five hundred bhūta-children, always would come to guard the persons who listened closely to this sūtra and uphold it, whether they are asleep or awake.

Caṇḍā, Caṇḍālika, Caṇḍikā, Kuntī, Kūṭadantī, and many other female bhūtas, who are the devourers of human's vital energies, are possessed of great supernatural powers, also would always diligently guard those beings in all those worlds throughout the ten directions of space who uphold this wonderful sūtra.

Sarasvatī devatā along with the myriads of devīs, Lakṣmī devatā and many other devatās along with their respective retinues, and also Dṛḍhapṛthivī devatā — the great divinity directly associated with every aspects of the farming of vegetation and fruits, and the forests — all of them would be delighted, would happily get closer to those beings who uphold this wonderful sūtra, to give them protection.

(By virtue of the protection rendered by all these celestial Lords, Devatās, and Amanuṣyas) to those beings who uphold this sūtra, it prolongs their lifespans and increases their physical strength, so much so that their countenance, appearance, and their accumulated virtuous merits, become magnificently enhanced many times more than they originally are.

Those strange, different disasters that happen to the region consequent to irregularities of the five planets and other asterisms, would be averted or eliminated without ever happen again. Those nightmares that happened every so often at night and which caused worries and languishment upon awaking, and all such kind of appalling things would be dispelled completely.

By virtue of the remarkable power of this sūtra, the force potential of the strength and prowess of Pṛthivī devatā reaches an extremely profound depth, whereby it can bring about the varying flavours of fertility of the terra. In this way, from expanse of the terra down to the innermost unbreakable core of earth, with the thickness of about a hundred and sixty-eight thousand yojanas, the different flavours of fertility within which are ubiquitous, exuding and moisten the soils, benefitting all sentient beings.

It is owing to the remarkable power of this sūtra that the varying flavours of essence of the soils (with the help given by Dṛḍhapṛthivī

devatā), are brought up through some hundred or so yojanas of distance to surface of the great terra. It also lets all those celestial divinities to acquire the vital energies, waxing their bodily strength, so that they live in joy and happiness.

All those earth-bound deities and other amanuṣyas across the regions of Jambudvīpa are similarly rejoiced, enjoying the boundless happiness. It is attributed to pertinent aspect of the power of this sūtra that all those guarding divinities are gratified, which conduced to the hundreds of kinds of grains, crops and fruits to be fully nousrished and be produced luxuriantly.

Flowers would bloom profusely in those gardens, parks, and groves, giving off the perfumes that are rich and fragrant, suffusing all over those places. Hundreds of kinds of grasses, herbal plants, and trees would grow healthy and straight upward, and their trunks would grow smooth without much bending.

There exist in the regions of Jambudvīpa inconceivable myriads of Nāgakanyās, who all would be inexpressibly exulted for the same reason, so much so that in every places of those ponds of lotus flowers, wherein they would make adornment by rendering the various kinds of lotus to grow, such as Utpala lotus, Kumuda lotus, Padma lotus, and Puṇḍarika lotus.

All those shrouding hazes in their own Nāga-palaces will be removed miraculously, the space atop will be cleared of dusts and gloominess, and in every directions will appear completely clear and bright. Sūryarāja, the blazing and brilliant lordly sun, rejoicingly emitting thousands of rays of bright light, shining through shrouds of darkness. Dwelling in the palace created of jambūnada-suvarṇa, evincing the boundless august virtues.

Sūrya-devaputra and Candradeva, for the same reason of hearing about this sūtra, are abundantly filled with the vital energies. Sūrya-devaputra, when manifests before the regions of Jambudvīpa, would rejoicingly emit the boundless ‘net’ of the mass of bright rays, shining in every directions. During its appearance, the ‘net’ of bright rays will awaken those various lotuses in the ponds.

In the regions of Jambudvīpa, the myriads of crops and fruits will be fully ripened according to the timely seasons, feeding well all those sentient beings. Shining of the rays of sun and moon during those times are special in their own ways. The constellations will revolve and orbit normally without erring into irregularities. So are wind and

rain, will follow according to the timely seasons, and the regions will be abounding with bumper harvests. The people will acquire plenteous wealth, without having anything needful in scarcity.

This profound and wonderful golden-illumining sūtra, depending on where in the region it is being recited and circulated, and such concerned region of the nation will get much enhancements and benefits, just as mentioned at length in the aforesaid, that is, the virtuous merits to be gained are simply limitless.

Chapter 14 : Foretelling by the Buddha to the Ten Thousand Devas

At that time, the Buddha was going to provide foretelling about the realisation of *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi* by Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva and his two sons, Rūpyaketu and Rūpyaprabha [87] . Just then, there was a flock of some ten thousand devaputras, with Jvalanāntaratejorāja as their leader, all of them were coming from the Trāyāstriṃśā celestial realm to where the Buddha was, prostrated their heads reverently at the Buddha's feet, and then sat down on one side.

At that time, the Buddha addressed Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva, "In the future age, after going passed the myriad hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of nayutāḥ immeasurable aeons, in the world called Survaṇaprabhāsitā, wherein you would attain *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*, with the titular appellations as Suvarṇaratnā-karacchatrakūta Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat. And at some point in time after the parinirvāṇa of this Tathāgata, and after the succeeding periods of the correct teachings and the seeming correct teachings [88] of this Tathāgata have come to end, the elder son, Rūpyaketu, would become the next Buddha in line to succeed this Tathāgata. The world at that time will have its name changed to be called as Virajadhvaja, and the titular appellations of this Buddha will be called Suvarṇajambhudvajakāñcanābha Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat. Then after the parinirvāṇa of this Tathāgata, and after the succeeding periods of the correct teachings and the seeming correct teachings of this Tathāgata have come to end, Rūpyaprabha, the second son, would become the next in line in succession to this Buddha. That world will have its name no different from the one before, and the titular appellations of this Buddha will be called Suvarṇabhāsa Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata,

[87] The two are whom he fathered when he was King Suvarṇabhujendra as said earlier on.
[88] Sanskrit: *sad-dharma* and *dharma-pratirūpaka*.

Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat."

The ten thousand devaputras, having seen and heard about these three great beings [89] received foretellings concerning them by the Buddha, and having also heard about this golden-illumining sūtra, whereupon it brought forth their minds of earnestness and reverence, minds that are unsullied likeneing to the pure lapis lazuli, and minds that are taintless and unimpeded like the clear space. At that time, the Buddha was aware of these ten thousand devaputras as already reached the level of maturity of their roots of virtues, forthwith accord them the prophecy thus, "All ye devaputras, in the future age, after going through the myriads of hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of nayutāḥ aeons, in the world [90] at that point in time, wherein all of you, from the same family, the same clan, and with the same name, would attain *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*, appearing one after another in the world, with the titular appellations known as Prasannavadanotpalagandhakūṭa [91] Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat, altogether as ten thousand Buddhas."

At that time, guarding Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree called Samatābhivardhana asked the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! These ten thousand devaputras from palaces in the Trāyāstriṃśā celestial realm, come to assemble here for listening to your teaching, why is it that the Tathāgata has given them forthwith the foretelling of realising Buddhahood ? World-Honoured One ! Erst I have not heard of these devaputras as being complete in the practice of six pāramī, nor also have I heard of them practising to such greater extent of even giving away unreservedly of their hands, feet, eyes or other parts of head, bone marrow, brain, beloved wife, wealth, grains and cloths, gold, silver, lapis lazuli, cowries, cornelians, genuine pearls, rare corals, rare conches, first-rate jades, gourmet food and drink, clothing, beddings, medicines for illnesses, the conveyances of elephants and steeds, palaces, residences, gardens and parks, ponds, slaves and minions, male and female servants, comparing to the various offerings of requisites that have been made by the myriads of Bodhisattvas, being offered in veneration to the past myriads of hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of nayutāḥ Buddhas, the World-Honoured Ones. Those Bodhisattvas in future time will also

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[89] "大士" means " 摩訶薩埵 " or *mahāsattva* in Sanskrit.

[90] The *name* of the world is not mentioned in this version of the Chinese rendition, but in Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama sūtrendrarājaḥ, it is mentioned as " 最勝因陀羅高幢世界 ", in Sanskrit as *loka-Śālendradhvajāgravatī*.

[91] It is mentioned in this Chinese rendition version as " 青目優鉢羅華香山如來 ", but in Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama-sūtrendrarājaḥ, it is mentioned as "面目清淨優鉢羅香山如來". Hence, the word "青目" is likely a transliteration error which should have been " 清目 ", meaning " 清淨面目 ".

unreservedly forsake the countless things which they valued highly, including giving away their eyes or other parts of head, bone marrow, beloved wife, wealth, grains and cloths, up to the extent of their slaves and servants, practise according to the order of sequence, to accomplish themselves in completeness of the six pāramī. And after having accomplished themselves as such, they would be well prepared to further practise the various austerities [92] through the myriads of aeons, and only then they will be accorded foretellings of the attainment of Buddhahood by the Tathāgata. World-Honoured One ! What is the reason and also what excellent roots of virtues with which these devaputras have practised such that they just come here temporarily from their heavens to listen to the Buddha's teaching, and yet they are able to receive at once the foretelling of becoming Buddhas in the future? I only wish that the World-Honoured One would kindly explain for me, to severe the web of my doubts.

At that time, the Buddha replied the guarding divinity of bodhi tree, "Virtuous devī ! They all have the fine reasons, they all have the wonderful roots of virtues, for they have been practised in concordance with attributes (of the ultimate realities of all phenomenal states). [93] How is it so ? In where they live, these devaputras have given up completely pleasures that are consequent on their five sense cognitions, is the reason why they are here today for listening to this golden-illumining sūtra. Having listened to this discourse, they are imbued with the purified minds of earnestness and reverence towards the teaching of this sūtra, for they have truly practised in accord with what I have explained [94]. Besides, they are in great faith for personally able to hear about the three Great Bodhisattvas being given the foretellings by the Buddha, and furthermore, also because they have indeed in the past resolved their minds with the vow (for realising *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*). These are the reasons why I presently accorded them the foretelling that at some point in time in the future ages they would accomplish themselves in *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*."

Chapter 15 : Curing Illnesses

The Buddha said to the guarding Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, "Virtuous devī ! Listen closely ! Listen carefully ! Deliberate well as I shall now explain for you concerning the past causal factors of the resolved vows of these ten thousand devaputras. At one point in time in the remote past myriad inconceivable asaṅkhya aeons, there was a Buddha who appeared in the world,

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[92] Austerities include, amongst the ascetic practices, to love thy enemies, to help thy enemies for the rest of your life, and the same is for all those other things to which one has still been holding displeasure, distaste, resentment, and all those other negative feelings.

[93] *Cf.* 釋智顗《金光明經文句》：「以隨相修」指今現行，行隨實相而修。

[94] 「如說修行」：謂正如所說諸法實相，而修其行。如如不動，寂滅諸惑，已能現證無生法忍。

by name of Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat. Virtuous devī ! During the period after the parinirvāṇa of this Tathāgata and after the succeeding periods of the correct teachings of this Tathāgata have come to end, thereafter in the subsequent period of seeming correct teachings of this Tathāgata, there was a king of the people called Sureśvaraprabha, who practised the Tathāgata's correct teachings, who reigned his kingdom in accordance with the code of true teachings, and consequently the masses were well-cultivated with the meek and mild dispositions who lived harmoniously, and appreciated filial obedience to their parents. There was an elder in the kingdom called Jaṭiṃdhara who was skilled in the medicinal prescriptions to save people from the agonies of their illnesses, and was also well-versed in the expedient knowledge about the growing and diminishing of the four great elements in body. Virtuous devī ! At that time in the home of this elder Jaṭiṃdhara, later was born a son called Jalavāhana, who afterwards was grown up with an excellent physique and countenance, foremost in rectitude, whose physical appearance was sensational with august virtues abound; who was clever and sharp-witted by innate nature; well comprehending the different treatises; and the various kinds of arts, letters writing, and calculations, all these he understood them very well. During that time, epidemic diseases bechanced the regions of this kingdom, and myriads of the sentient beings couldn't spare themselves from this adversity, and were oppressed by all those miseries.

Virtuous devī ! At that time, Jalavāhana, the elder's son, having seen the hundreds of thousands countless sentient beings enduring all such miseries, aroused the great compassion for them, and gave such thought to himself thus, 'These myriad hundreds of thousands sentient beings are experiencing such miseries. Although my father is skilled in medicinal prescriptions for delivering them from those sufferings, and well-versed in the expedient knowledge about the growing and diminishing of the four great elements in body, he nevertheless is already in old age with infirmities; his current state is doted and wizened; his skin is slack and the face is full of wrinkles; his condition is haggard and trembling, needing the support of a walking stick in toing and froing; his body in weariness and lassitude, is impossible for him to go to the towns and villages. Moreover, there are hundreds of thousands numberless sentient beings who have fallen ill, and those who are more seriously ill are just not able to receive the timely rescue. I must now go over to the place of my great physician father, to consult him regarding the secret medicinal prescriptions. After consultation and learning from him, I shall go to the towns and villages to attend to those beings who are plagued with the various serious illnesses, to render them emancipation from all those myriad unbearable agonies.'

Just then, this son of the elder, after having given himself such thought, went to the place of his father. Upon arriving, he prostrated with his head

touching the ground, (pointing at his father's feet), then held his palms together in reverence, and asked his father about the growing and diminishing of the four great elements in body in the following verses :

> In what ways shall I know the metabolic languishment and impairment of the four great elements [95] as inextricably tied up with the six cognitive sense-organs, has caused people to be stricken with all those illnesses ?
>
> How shall I understand people's consumption of food and drinks in connexion with the seasonal changes, and having consumed the kinds of food and drinks relative to seasons that their body's heat will not be crippled ?
>
> How shall I know the ways to cure illnesses that are related to predominance of the element of motion and the element of heat, and pulmonary illnesses that are attributable to superfluity of the element of cohesion, as well as illnesses owing to the equal portions [96] (of the combination of these three great elements) ?
>
> When does it come into being the respective illnesses related to surfeit in the levels of the element of motion, the element of heat, and the element of cohesion, that endanger the health of living beings ?

So then the elder father explained the medical prescriptions to his son, replying in verses :

> Three months are summer, three months are autumn, three months are winter, three months are spring, altogether are twelve months, or it can be months biannually of three plus three in each. By counting in this way, there are four periods in a year.
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> By taking dyads of two months, there will be six divisions of months in a year. [97] If we speak of two divisions of two months each, then a

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[95] The basic building blocks of all physical forms are the four great elements (*mahābhūta*) : the *element of extension*, characterises the properties of hardness and softness; the *element of cohesion*, characterises the properties of cohesiveness and fluidity; the *element of heat*, characterises the properties of warmth and coldness; *the element of motion*, characterises the properties of pushing and supporting the other three elements. Literally, the *mahābhūta* are referred to as elements of "earth, water, fire, and wind" (*pṛthivī-dhātu, ab-dhātu, teja-dhātu, vāyū-dhātu*).

[96] The term "等分" as explained in the commentary《金光明經文句新記》 by Venerable ZongYi (釋從義) :「三大增害於地，名等分病。或身分增害三大，亦是等分，屬地病。」三大即水病、增火病、風病。

[97] In some part of the region, there are only spring, summer, and winter, each of these three seasons has two divisions of two months each.

year would have six divisions of months.

Whether going by the biannual three-plus-three months (in four seasons) or the two divisions of two-plus-two months each (in tri-seasons), as long as the people are able to adjust their consumption of food and drink to the tidings of seasonal changes, it can benefit the health of their body.

According to medical science, when the growing and diminishing aspect of metabolism of the four great elements and the six cognitive sense-organs of the body are discordantly in disarray, it begets the various illnesses of the body.

The skilled physician would recommend regulating and nursing in balance of the six great elements [98] of the body in following with months of the four seasons or the three seasons. For those who are sick, the kinds of food and drink, and medical stews and concoctions to be taken should adjust appropriately according to the nature of their illnesses.

Illnesses related to excess of the element of air motion in body commonly arise in summer. Illnesses related to excess of the element of heat in body commonly arise in autumn. Illnesses related to excess of the combination of elements in body commonly arise in winter. Illnesses related to excess of the element of cohesion in lungs [99] commonly exacerbates in spring.

Those with illnesses having excess of the element of air motion in body during summer should take the fatty, greasy, salty, and acidic food, and those food must be eaten warm. Those with illnesses having excess of the element of heat during autumn should take the sweet and cold food. Those with illnesses having excess of the combination of elements during winter should take the sweet, sour, fatty, and oily food. Those illnesses having excess of the element of cohesion during spring should take the fatty, oily, pungent, and warm food.

Sputum forming in lungs happens after taking food. Illnesses related to excess of the element of heat happens during digestion of the taken food. Illnesses related to excess of the element of air motion happens after digestion of the food that has been taken.

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[98] The six great elements of earth, cohesion, heat, air motion, ether, and consciousness.

[99] It is referring to the excess of sputum.

> Disproportionate relations between these four great elements in the body ensue in the three durations of the day. If it is emaciation owing to excess of the element of air motion in body, the patient has to be nursed with fatty, greasy, and butter-rich food. For illnesses related to excess of the element of heat, the patients have to take the stews of harītakī fruit. For illnesses related to excess of the combination of elements, the patients should take concoction of the three medicinal ingredients, namely from the mix of sweet, sour, and greasy butter-rich foods. For pulmonary illnesses (due to chronic cough and sputum), the patients should take the cough-out medicine [100].
>
> If illnesses as consequent to excess level of the respective element of air motion, element of heat, element of cohesion, and combination of these three elements in body, happen outside the usual gauge of seasonal durations, the physician should consider prescribing medical stews and the types of food and drink to be taken in accordance with the specific nature of the illnesses.

Virtuous devī ! At that time, Jalavāhana, the elder's son, having consulted his physician father concerning the growing and diminishing of the four great elements in body, thereby acquired from him the necessary information on all the medical prescriptions. Just then, with knowledge of the medical prescriptions, he went to the cities, towns, and villages all over the country, to wherever places there are beings who are ill, spoke gently and comfortingly to them thus, 'I am a physician ! I am a physician who is well-versed in medical prescriptions, and I shall presently give you treatment to cure your illnesses, to let them be healed.'

Virtuous devī ! At that time, those other beings were greatly exulted and went into rapture upon hearing about Jalavāhana, the elder's son, who spoke softly and consolingly to the people who have fallen ill, and wanted everyone to be healed of their illnesses. By then, hundreds of thousands myriad all those other beings who were seriously ill have heard about what he compassionately said, were all greatly rejoiced, so much so that the various illnesses which they have been afflicted with miraculously healed all by themselves, recovering to fine states they were before, and full of energies.

Virtuous devī ! There were also numerous other beings who have fallen ill, whose conditions were very serious, were very difficult to be cured, and they came together to the place of the elder's son. Jalavāhana then prescribed the phenomenal medicines for them, and having taken the medicines, their illnesses were cured, and their health were also recovered.

Virtuous devī ! This elder's son, Jalavāhana, was able to cure all those beings in the country, to be freed from their various illnesses and agonies."

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[100] That is, efficacious medicines of antitussive and expectorant respectively.

Chapter 16 : The Elder's son, Jalavāhana

The Buddha told Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree [101] , "By then Jalavāhana, the elder's son, has healed the myriad all those beings in King Sureśvaraprabha's territorial regions of their illnesses and agonies, has helped them to recover their body conditions back to they were before, and they began to experience again happiness. Because these beings were freed fully from their illnesses, they thereby frequently arranged for themselves deeds of meritable virtues, practised generous alms-offerings, honoured and respected this son of the elder, and generally said to themselves in this way, 'Excellent, this son of the elder ! You have been making enhancement (for yourself and others) with deeds of blessed merits, have been benefitting the numerous living beings with prolonged lifespans, and you are presently the greatest and foremost physician, skilled in freeing living beings from the numerous serious illnesses, and definitely must be the Bodhisattva who is proficient in the knowledge about the prescriptions of medicines.'

Virtuous devī ! During that time, the elder's son was married and his wife was called Jalāmbugarbha, who had two sons. One was called Jalāmbara, and the other, Jalagarbha. One day, this son of the elder brought his two sons to travel with him to towns and villages, one after the other, and finally they went past a big open marsh, and saw tigers, wolves, foxes, jackals, birds and other wild beasts, all flocking hurriedly in one direction to a place. Just then, this elder's son asked himself thus, 'why are all these beasts galloping in that particular direction ? I would better follow after them to see what is going on.'

As the elder's son followed after them, he then saw a sizable pool, the water in it was drying up, and there were many fishes in that pool. At that moment, the elder's son brought forth his great compassion upon seeing those piteous fishes. At that time, he saw a hamadryad who had manifested the upper half of her body out of a tree and said to him, "Very good ! Bravo ! Great virtuous man ! These fishes are pitiable. You can provide them with water, for it is the reason why you were given the name Jalavāhana. Also, there are two reasons as to why Jalavāhana was named. Firstly, it can bring over the water, and secondly, it can provide the water. Thus, you should now put into effect the significations of your name." The elder's son then asked the hamadryad, "What is the total headcount of these fishes ?" The hamadryad replied, "The number is a complete, fully ten thousand."

Virtuous devī ! Having heard of this number, at that moment, Jalavāhana gave rise to a great compassionate thought as incumbent upon him to benefit (these sentient beings). Virtuous devī ! During that time, this wide pool had been exposing to the blazing sun and only had little water left in it. These ten

[101] Although it is only mentioned as " 樹神 " in this version of the Chinese translation, it must be understood as to mean similarly " 道場菩提樹神 ".

thousand fishes were close to death, darting about in the four directions. Upon seeing this elder, they arouse some hope which they could depend on, and their eyes followed to look at the direction to which this elder was going, without ever wanting to give it up. At that time, this elder's son hurried off in the four directions in search of water, but to no avail. He then looked further around, and he saw some big trees, and so he (and the two sons) went over to collect branches and leaves of the trees, and then put them to the pool as the cool shades for the fishes. Having done that, he then tried to ascertain where did the water in the pool come from. He went all around the four directions, but without success in finding the source of the water. He then ran farther to other places, and he saw a big stream called Jalāgamā. At that time, there were several wicked people, in order for catching all the fishes in the pool, they cut off the flow of water at the dangerous overhanging cliff in the upstream so that they were able to stop completely the water from flowing down. But the cut-off point at such dangerous overhanging cliff was no easy task for reparation, and it was estimated to take some ninety days for fixing it up, and even then there was no confidence the reparation work could be completed with a hundred or up to a thousand people, let alone only I myself to fix it !

At that time, the elder's son (and his two sons) quickly returned to the place of King Sureśvaraprabha. When he met him, he bowed his head in obeisance at the King's feet, then sat down on one side, held his palms together, made known his reason for coming, and said thus, 'I have attended to curing the various illnesses of the people in regions of Your Majesty, and as I gradually travelled past a big open marsh, I saw a sizable pool with the water in it fast drying up, and inside which are ten thousand fishes visibly exposing to the hot sun, are presently in dire straits, are ere long going to die. I only wish that Your Majesty could lend me twenty big elephants for carrying bags of water, to save the life of those fishes, in the same way as I endeavoured intently to save the life all those patients.' At that time, the King right away ordered his Prime Minister to quickly provide him what he needs. Just then, upon receiving the King's directive, the Prime Minister said to the elder's son, 'Well done ! Great being ! You can now personally go to the elephants-shed to select the elephants as you like, to bring benefit to those sentient beings, to accord them happiness.'

At that time, this elder's son together with his two sons led away the twenty big elephants, and borrowed leather bags from people in the city, then they hurried off to the cut-off point at the upstream of the river to fill the bags with water. After that, they let the elephants carrying those bags of water, then they headed off rapidly to the fast-drying-up pool in the marsh. When they reached there, they offloaded those bags of water and poured all the water into the pool, and soon the water filled up the pool to what it normally was. Then this elder's son lingered about as he walked around the pool, and at that time those fishes also followed him along the shoreline. This elder's son then wondered thus, 'Why are all these fishes following me as I walk along the shore ? I suppose

they must have been troubled by their burning hunger, are expressing their desires for food [102] from me. So then I should provide them food today.'

Virtuous devī ! At that time, this elder's son told his sons, "You bring along one elephant of the biggest size and the most powerful, quickly go back home to inform your elder grandfather that I said thus : All those edible things at home, to the extent of a portion of my parents' food [103], including portions of the food of my wife and servants, collect all of them and let the elephant carry it and come back here as soon as you can." Then the two sons did just as they were told, rode on the biggest and strongest elephant and headed for home, to inform their grandfather about the aforementioned.

At that time when they reached home, the two sons gathered all those foods, put on the elephant's back, and quickly rushed to where their father was by the fast-drying-up pool in the marsh. The elder's son was rejoiced and very much rapturous when he saw his sons returning. Then he took the foods [104] from his sons, spread all of them around in that pool to feed those fishes, whereupon he thought to himself thus, 'I have now given food to these fishes, filled up all their bellies, and in the future lifetimes, I shall offer them truths of the teaching as food' [105]. Then it occurred to him again thus, 'I have in the past heard in an araṇya regarding a bhikṣu who recited a Mahāyāna Vaipulya scripture, wherein it mentioned that whosoever the sentient being who happens to hear of the name of Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata in the dying moments, this sentient being would be born into the celestial realm forthwith after death. I hence should explain to these ten thousand fishes about the profound twelve factors of dependent origination, and also recite to them the name of Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata.

During those times, there were two kinds of living beings in Jambudvīpa. The first kind was concerning those who have kept deep faith in meanings of the teachings of the Mahāyāna Vaipulya sūtras. The second kind was concerning those who used to vilify and censure teachings of the Mahāyāna Vaipulya sūtras, without ever having the least faith nor any good feeling of it. Just then, the elder's son brought forth such a thought, 'I shall now go down to the pool to explain to them this profound and wonderful teaching.' Having just contemplated about it, he went down right away to the water (up to knee-depth), and recited this : 'Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksaṃbuddha, Vidyā-caraṇasampanna, Sugata, Lokavid, Anuttara, Puruṣa-damyasārathi, Śāstā-devamanuṣyāṇām, Buddha-Bhagavat'. In the remote past when Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata was practising in the path of Bodhisattva, he has made such a vow thus, 'If there are unenlightened sentient beings throughout the ten directions

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[102] The original translation version mentions " 飲食 ". It is a negligent translation error, which should be just " 食 ". The fishes do not "drink". They need only food.

[103] Ibid. " 飲噉 " should just have been " 食噉 ".

[104] Ibid. " 飲食 " should be just " 食 ".

[105] Sanskrit: *dharmāhāra*.

of space who have heard about my name in their dying moments of death, I would let them be born into the thirty-three heavens of Trāyastriṃśā celestial realm immediately after the end of their lifespan.' At that time, this elder's son also explained for all these fishes the profound and wonderful dharma, namely 'avidyā pratyayaḥ saṃskāraḥ, saṃskāraḥ pratyayaḥ vijñāna, vijñāna pratyayaḥ nāmarūpa, nāmarūpa pratyayaḥ ṣaḍāyatana, ṣaḍāyatana pratyayaḥ sparśaḥ, sparśaḥ pratyayaḥ vedanā, vedanā pratyayaḥ tṛṣṇā, tṛṣṇā pratyayaḥ upādāna, upādāna pratyayaḥ bhavaḥ, bhavaḥ pratyayaḥ jātiḥ**,** jātiḥ pratyayaḥ jarā, maraṇa, śokaḥ, paridevaḥ, duḥkhāḥ.' [106]

Virtuous devī ! After the teaching was given, this son of the elder and his two sons went home together. At a later period of time, Jalavāhana, the elder's son, went to bed after he was drunk at a gathering feast with his guests. At that time, an abrupt earthquake rocked the region, and due to that devastating effect, those ten thousand fishes died on the same day, and were born into heavens of the celestial realm of Trāyastriṃśā. Having gained their rebirths in the heavens, they began to wonder thus, 'On what grounds of the virtuous merits of deeds that we are born here in heavens of the celestial realm of Trāyastriṃśā ?' They also said to each other like this as they recalled 'All of us were initially born with the form of fish as we have plummeted into realm of the creatures in the region of Jambudvīpa, but because the elder's son have rescued us with water and food, who has also explained to us the profound dharma of the twelvefold factor of dependent origination, as well as recited to us the name of Ratnaśikhin Tathāgata, by virtue of which all of us are born here in the realm of Trāyastriṃśā. Hence, we now ought to go to the place of this son of the elder, to make our requitals and offerings in gratitude for his kindness to us.'

Then these ten thousand devaputras came down from the realm of Trāyastriṃśā to Jambudvīpa, and went to the home of this elder's son, the great physician. At that time, this elder's son was sleeping upstairs in the house, without clothes on his body. These ten thousand devaputras offered a wonderful heavenly necklace that was strung together by ten thousand pieces of real pearls, and laid it beside his head. They again offered another necklace of the ten thousand real pearls and placed it at the sole of his foot; laid another necklace of the ten thousand real pearls beside his right rib; laid another necklace of the ten thousand real pearls beside his left rib. They strew down the ethereal maṇḍala flowers and the larger maṇḍala flowers, the magnitude of which mounted up to knee-height. They also contrived the various kinds of wonderful celestial musical sounds. All those beings who were asleep during that time in this region of Jambudvīpa were all awakened as a result, and so did this son of the elder who was also woken up by what were then going on.

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[106] The co-conditioning factors are ignorance, mental formations, consciousnesses, mind-matter, the six bases, contact, feeling, craving, grasping, existences, birth, aging-death, including in its afterlife of melancholy (or apprehension), sorrow (and lamentation). affliction and suffering.

These ten thousand devaputras soared high up in the sky and were travelling about in the regions of King Sureśvaraprabha, showering down everywhere the wonderful heavenly lotus flowers. Then these devaputras went to their previous dwelling place of the drying-up pool in the marsh, showering down the heavenly maṇḍala flowers, and from there they returned to heavens in the realm of Trāyastriṃśā freely as they are, enjoying themselves in the five forms of sensuous desires [107].

By the time night was over in Jambudvīpa, the next day King Sureśvaraprabha asked his Prime Minister, 'What happened last night regarding the appearances of all those wondrous spectacular objects, sending out the great brilliance ?' The Prime Minister answered, 'Your Majesty shall be aware that there were numerous devaputras who went to the home of Jalavāhana, the elder's son, strewed down the heavenly necklaces containing four thousand pieces of genuine pears, and also the countless ethereal maṇḍala flowers.' The King then told the Prime Minister, 'You go personally to the house of this elder's son, exhorts with the nice words and invite him to come over here.' The Prime Minister received the order, and with his guards they went straight to the house of this elder's son, and upon arriving he made known the King's order, inviting this son of the elder.

Afterwards, this son of the elder reached the King's palace, thereafter the King asked him, 'Do you know why it has manifested all such stunning spectacles ?' This elder's son replied, 'Your Majesty, I know assuredly that it must be about those ten thousand fishes in the pool which all have already come to the end of their life.' Then the King said, 'You can now dispatch someone over there to ascertain about this thing.' At that time, the elder's son, Jalavāhana, sent his sons to the place of the pool, to find out whether those fishes were all dead or still alive. The two sons having heard this, then set forth to the pool. Upon reaching the pool side, they saw that there were heaps of the regular and larger-sized maṇḍala flowers, but that all those fishes in the pool were already dead. Having seen this, they returned toin inform their father that all those fishes indeed have already died. By then, Jalavāhana knew exactly what happened and he went to see the King, and said to him, 'Your Majesty, those ten thousand fishes in the pool have all come to the end of their life (and in the dried-up pool were strewn all over those heavenly maṇḍala flowers).' Having heard this, the King was joyful about it."

At that time, the Buddha told Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, "Virtuous devī ! Those who wish to know who is previously this son of the elder, Jalavāhana, it is presently me. Previously his elder son, Jalāmbara, it is presently Rāhula, and previously his second son, Jalagarbha, it is presently Ānanda. The ten thousand fishes in the pool at that time, it is presently those ten thousand devaputras. It is on grounds of this that I presently accorded them

[107] The five sense-based desires, viz. forms, sounds, smells, flavours, and tactility.

the foretelling that they would realise *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi* at some time in the future. The hamadryad who manifested the upper half of her body at that time, it is presently you, virtuous devī."

Chapter 17 : Life-sacrifice

At that time, Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! I have heard that Bhagavat had personally gone through myriads of austerities in the Path of Bodhisattva's practices throughout the past ages, generously giving away even own life, flesh, blood, bones, and marrow. May the World-Honoured One narrate a little about the reasons for having had to undergo those austere way of practices, for the benefits and ultimate blissfulness [108] of all those sentient beings."

At that time, the World-Honoured One manifested his psychic power [109]. Because of the force of this supernatural power, the great terra went through six kinds of quaking, and on the ground in the midst of the dharma assembly came out a stūpa made of the seven kinds of jewels, covering on top of it by a net strung by the various kinds of precious stones. At that instant, all those in the assembly having seen such spectacle, aroused the thought of it as really rare. Just then, the World-Honoured One stood up from his seat, made obeisance to the stūpa, paid his reverence by circumambulating around it to the right, and then returned to his seat.

After that, Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree asked the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! Loka-vināyaka Tathāgata appears in the world, who is always venerated by all beings, who is the most excellent and most honoured amongst all beings. But why did the Tathāgata make obeisance to this stūpa ?" The Buddha replied, "Virtuous devī ! The relics of my śarīra that belong to the periods of time when I was basically toiling in practices of the Path of Bodhisattva, have been kept in this stūpa, so that by virtue of these relics of śarīra I have fast attested to my ultimate awakening in *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*. [110] "

At that time, the Buddha said to Ānanda, "You can open the stūpa, take out

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[108] The phrase "for the "benefits and ultimate blissfulness of all those beings" is grounded on their utter comprehension about the absolute reality of all dharmas, and thenceforward practise in their daily life in accord with such penetrated awakening.

[109] The term "神足", also called "如意足通" (Sanskrit : *ṛddhipādā*), rendered as "the psychic power of ubiquity", is one of the six kinds of supernatural powers of the Buddha. But in this context, it seems to denote the generic term of Buddha's psychic power.

[110] Likewise, when you bowed at images of the Buddha, you paid obeisance to the formless dharmakāyas of the Buddhas, and similarly too without saying, to the intrinsic spotless Buddha-nature of suchness of your own self. That's what all the Buddhas expect it to be, so as you will ere long attain the peerless enlightenment of Buddhahood.

the śarīras to show them to this assembly. These śarīras formed as the corollary of the incalculable virtuous merits of having truly put into practice the six pāramitās."

So then Ānanda, having heard what the Buddha instructed, went over to the stūpa, paid his homage and made offering to it, then opened its door, and he saw inside the stūpa a lovely case made of the seven kinds of precious jewels. He lifted up the lid of the case, saw that the śarīras were distinctive in the wonderful red and white colours, and then said to the Buddha, "World-Honoured One ! The śarīras in the stūpa are red and white in colours."

The Buddha said to Ānanda, "These are true śarīras of a great being, and you please bring it over here." So then Ānanda held the jewelled case up above his head, walked over, knelt on the ground, and handed it over to the Buddha. At that time, the Buddha told all those in the assembly, "All of you now can pay your homage to these śarīras. These holy relics are the results of truthful practices in keeping closely with the code of discipline, undeluded meditation, and transcendental wisdom, are truly rare to attain in the mundane world, which form the uppermost field of blessings." Upon hearing this, all those in the assembly were very much rejoiced, rose from their seats immediately, held their palms together, and bowed reverently at these śarīras of a great being.

At that time, in order for severing the net of doubts of those in the assembly, the Buddha shed light on the primary causes and conditions in respect of these śarīras, "Ānanda ! There was a King in the past era by the name of Mahāratha, who personally practised morality, reigned his kingdom in accordance with code of ethics, and without ever embroiling himself and the kingdom in conflicts with any hostile enemies. He had three sons who were admirably upright in characters, extraordinary in countenances, and superlative in marks of august virtues. The eldest son is called Mahāpraṇāda. The second son is called Mahādeva, and the youngest son is called Mahāsattva. One day, the three sons went together for amusement and sightseeing of sceneries in the park, and following the order of their activities they gradually reached a bamboo grove, and stopped their carriage for a respite. The eldest prince then said worryingly to his brothers, "My mind has been much in dread today. Nothing whatsoever misfortune will happen today in this park, won't it ?" The second prince then said thus, "I do not feel the least reluctance to part with even my body should a tragedy happen today, but just that I have worries and apprehension if I had to be parted from persons whom I cherish." The third prince then said thus, "Personally I do not feel any dread nor apprehension and affliction today, for nirvāṇa suffuses this mountainous park — a retreat praised by all those supernatural beings, a place which can afford serenity, peacefulness, and experience of blissfulness to the true meditation practitioners."

Having given expressions to their minds, the princes continued to move forward. At some point along the way, they came across a tigress. This was a

tigress which had given birth a week ago to seven cubs, surrounding the tigress which looked extremely haggard owing to hunger and thirst, and its body was so emaciated that it was about to die any time soon. The first prince after he saw this tigress said thus, "Alas ! [111] It has been a week since this tigress gave birth, and was unable to find food as she is being surrounded closely by the seven cubs. If the tigress is completely hard-pressed by hunger, she definitely will devour her own cubs." The third prince then asked, "What food does this tigress usually eat ?" The eldest prince answered, "This tigress only eat fresh, warm fleshes and blood." The third prince asked, "Who amongst us would like to sacrifice his own life for food to this tigress ?" The second prince uttered thus, "This tigress is much starving, thin and frail, weary and in utter privation, doesn't live much longer, not possible for her to find food elsewhere, and even if she were able to go somewhere to look for food, it would be of no avail at all. I wonder who really would sacrifice his own life for this starving tigress ?" The eldest prince then said, "Indeed the most difficult thing is none other than sacrificing one's own life." The second prince uttered thus, "Because presently craving and begrudgingness are preponderant in us, is why we are not able to forsake our life, and really that is because of our meagre wisdom that we are so much appalled at doing such thing. But if there were those great beings who have the best interests of others at heart, and have brought forth their great compassion for the well-being of all sentient beings, then to them the self-sacrifice of own life would pose no difficulty at all." At that point of time, all these princes were apprehensive, gazing for a long time at the wretched situation of the tigress and her cubs without at all taking their eyes off it. Having seen for quite a while of it, they then left the place.

At that time, the third prince gave such a thought to himself thus, "Really it appears that the moment has arrived for self-sacrifice of my life for the life of another. Why ? Ever since my lives in the past, I have been abandoning this body similarly without any good reasons whatsoever, and also, I have been caring for (this body as) place of residence, and again, I have been furnishing it with clothing, food, drink, beds, medicines, elephant-drawn and horse-drawn carriages, nursing it at any time so as it would not be deficient in anything. And yet how could this body be ungrateful as not to requite kindness but instead has begotten indignation and ill-will ? This body, nonetheless, would naturally be ruined as a nature of impermanency. Moreover, this body is not something solid as imperishable, nor does it give me any real benefits, but rather it is damnable just as robber, and is akin to a privy to which I go. I shall today make use of this body to perform an unsurpassed deed of virtue, to serve as some kind of a huge bridge (for me and all sentient beings) to cross over the briny of saṃsāra. And furthermore, if I were to renounce and sacrifice this body unhesitatingly, it would mean synonymously my abandonment of the

[111] What is translated in this Chinese rendition version as " 怪哉 " is inappropriate. It should have been " 哀哉 " as translated in Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama-sūtrendrarājaḥ sūtra.

numberless pyogenic infection of carbuncles, and the hundreds of thousands myriad fears of all kinds. This body only facilitates urine and excrement. This body is unfirm, is akin to the bubbles on the water surface. This body is impure, is comparable to the dwelling place of all those myriad worms. This body is abominable, is besmeared all over by blood and veins, is interconnected between skins of bones and all parts of brain. In these ways as I observed them, those rather are the extremely damnable causes of suffering, and presently need to be forsaken [112] for realising state of cessation in quiescence, the unsurpassed nirvāṇa, in order to be forever free from apprehensions and afflictions [113] , and to put to rest my endless cycle of birth and death. Freedom from encumbrance of all the worldly afflictions is tantamount to the immeasurable virtuous merits attained by virtue of the practitioner's mundane-transcending wisdom through meditation and dhyāna, utterly capable of accomplishing the wondrous dharmakāya, which is blessed with the hundredfold kind of sublime virtuous merits, and such person would be praised by all the Buddhas. And with the accomplishment of this unparalleled dharmakāya, I would accord all living beings the limitless bliss of dharma [114]."

At that time, this youngest prince was very much doughty and capable of doing what he had wanted to, who had been cultivating his mind immaculately by way of the sublime great compassion for others, was the reason he made the resolve of a such a great vow. As he felt some misgivings about his two brothers being overcome by terror and awe, or belike they might be headstrong to cause stoppage for making things difficult for me, he then said thus, "Brothers, both of you and the entourage can now return home. (I have other thing to attend to and will go back later. [115])" So then Prince Mahāsattva went back to the place of the tigress, took off his garment and hung it on the bamboo twig, then uttered such a vow: "What I presently going to do is for the benefits of all those sentient beings, is for bearing testimony to the peerless and unsurpassed enlightenment; is for forsaking what is the most difficult thing in renunciation by being imperturbable in my great compassion; is for personal realisation [116] of the wisdom for unexcelled bodhi as praised by all Buddhas; is for my wish to liberate all sentient beings in the three spheres of life existences; is for the reason of wanting to put to end all my fears and troubling afflictions in all matters concerning life and death." Having made this vow, so then Prince Mahāsattva laid himself down in front of the starving tigress. But the tigress did nothing to him as a result of the power he demonstrated of his great compassion. Prince Mahāsattva then thought about thus, "This tigress now is

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[112] The term " 患厭 " can be understood as " 苦患、厭惡 ", 故應厭離。

[113] The term " 憂患 " is rendered as " 憂慮、苦患 ".

[114] Sanskrit: *dharmārāma*. (法樂)

[115] This crucial phrase is omitted, is shown in Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama-sūtrendrarājaḥ sūtra.

[116] The term " 求" as in " 為求 " 證 is inappropriate as it contradicts " 菩提智 ".

frail and wan, is bereft of strength, is why it is unable to have the fleshes and blood of my body as food." He then rose up to have his limbs and bare body held in the mouth of the tigress, but despite many times he had tried, it didn't work out as what he had expected from the tigress. After that he picked up a dry bamboo twig to prod at his neck until blood oozed out of it, and then he climbed up to the high precipice above, jumped down to his death in front of the tigress.

At that instant, the great terra was rocked with six kinds of quake, and the sun appeared without the bright shine, just like in those moments when Rāhula was born, Asurarāja was graspingly blocking the sun's rays off. Also, there showered down from ether a vast array of heavenly flowers, giving off various kinds of marvellous fragrance. Just then all those Gods in realms of firmament having seen this thing of self-sacrifice that happened, were all greatly rejoiced, exclaimed it as truly unprecedented, and extolled thus, "Excellent ! Bravo, Great being ! Right now you are truly a practitioner of great compassion, able to part unhesitatingly with what is really a very difficult thing in forsaking, who is the strongest and most valorous amongst the dharma-practitioners. You have earned the praise from all the Buddhas as having personally attested to the eternal bliss of quiescence-abiding, and so you will ere long be enlightened to the untroubled, afflictions-free, brizened state of nirvāṇa."

The tigress at that time after seeing blood oozed out and besmeared the bare body of the prince, at once lapped the blood, ate his flesh until only the bones were left. At the same time, the eldest prince saw and felt big quaking of the terra, and said to the second prince in verses :

> Quaking of the great terra and the vast brinies; the sun without the brilliant shine as if it is blocked; from above welkin strewing down all those flowers with the different perfumes — apparently, it must have been my youngest brother, who has forsaken his body.

The second prince also said in verses :

> A week passed since the tigress has given birth, and with the seven curbs surrounding her ever so intimately, the tigress was completely bereft of food and water, and with her emaciated condition and loss of strength, I wouldn't say that her end of life is far away.
>
> My youngest brother is endued with the great compassion, aware of extreme emaciation of the tigress, fearing that she might be unable to put up with the unbearable hunger and then devours her own cubs, I thus worry that he might have determinedly sacrificed his own life in order for saving the lives of others.

So then the two princes became sad, worried, unnerved, weeping and bemoaning, their faces showed the waxen pallor, and then they went together to the place of the tigress. Upon arriving, they saw the shawl, undergarment, and vesture that he wore were draped over a bamboo twig; human bones, nails, and hairs were scattered about in a mess; the ground was begrimed with blood all over. Having seen for themselves such a scene, they passed out involuntarily and fell down upon the bones. After quite a good while they then regained their consciousness, with their heads upraised [117] and wailed aloud, they were heard saying thus, "Our brother acted puerilely. His ability and talent surpasses many other people, is especially cherished by our parents, and how could it be that he suddenly sacrificed his body voluntarily for feeding the starving tigress ? When we return to the palace today and being asked by our parents, how then should we answer them ? We would rather die together here in one place than bearing desolately to see these leftover bones, nails and hairs of my brother. How could we leave all these callously and still have the heart to go back to see our parents, wives and children, kindred, friends, and wise mentors ?" The two princes were sobbing and felt chagrined at that time, and slowly in the end they left that place.

During that time, the royal guards and attendants of the youngest prince went around in all directions in search of him, and they said to each other, "Whereabouts is our Lord today [118] ?" At that time, the queen was in her sleep, and she dreamt of her breasts being cut off, her teeth falling out naturally by themselves, and also one of the three dove-fledglings in her possession was snatched away by a hawk and being eaten up. Just then an earthquake happened and she was woken up, feeling sad and worried, and at the same time terrified. She then said to herself in these verses :

> What really happens today that the great terra, the big sea, and all those things around are shaking dramatically, and consequently all living creatures become restless, the sun is without the brilliant shine as if it is being blocked off ?
>
> I feel so worried and agonised, and my eyelids are shuddering uncontrollably. Just like what I have been experiencing today of all these signs of inauspiciousness, it's bound to happen unpropitious misfortunes and agonies.

As the queen having uttered thus, at that time the royal messenger came back to inform about news of the third prince that was heard from an external source, who was panicky and terrified, entered the residence and said to the

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[117] It is translated as " 舉首 " (with heads upraised) in this text, but in Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama-sūtrendrarājaḥ sūtra, it is translated as " 舉手 " (with arms upraised).

[118] It is translated as " 我天 " in the text, which is the way the retinue addressed the youngest prince as their " Lord ".

queen, "Just now I have heard from an external source that those guards and attendants were looking everywhere for the third prince, but without success of his whereabouts."

The queen having listened to this, was filled with worries and agonies, and tears were all over her face as she went over to the place of the King. Upon arriving, she said to the King, "I have heard from my messenger a while ago who got the news from outside, that we most likely have lost our youngest son." The King was so deeply grieved by the news he has just heard that he swooned a couple of times. Feeling sorrowful, choked up with sobs, anguished and agonised, the King wiped off the tears from his face and said, "How come it happens today that I lost my most beloved son ?"

A that time, the Bhagavat intends to restate the main points, said in verses :

I had in the past myriads of ages unconditionally forsaken my body which was in general valued most highly, for attesting to the perfect enlightenment.

Regardless of whether I was a King or was born as a Prince in all those bygone periods, I had always made personal sacrifices of what were often regarded as the extremely difficult thing in generous giving, in order for bearing testimony to the perfect enlightenment.

As I recall from my prior lifetimes, there was once a great King called Mahāratha. This King had a younger son called Mahāsattva, who had been able to perform substantial magnitude of alms-giving.

This prince had two elder brothers. The eldest one was called Mahāpraṇāda, and the second elder one was called Mahādeva. One day, the three of them set out together in an excursion. They later came to an outlying area of the mountainous park, therein they beheld a tigress which had given birth to seven cubs not very long ago, but which was beset by extreme starvation without any food ever since.

At that time, this great being, (Mahāsattva) brought forth his mind of great compassion upon seeing this, and silently said to himself thus, 'I shall today make self-sacrifice of my body, for fearing that this tigress might eventually be overwhelmed by hunger so much so that she will devour her own cubs.'

At some time later on, the great being went up to the edge of a high cliff of the mountain, jumped down fearlessly to his death right

before the starving tigress, for the purpose of saving the life of this tigress and her cubs. Just then quakes occurred instantly throughout the great terra as well as in all those surrounding mountains, and the wild animals and other creatures were all terrified. Tigers, lions, wolves, and other beasts ran about in all four directions. The world suddenly turned into gloom, without the usual brilliance.

As his two elder brothers at that time still remained in the bamboo grove, they were worries-stricken, depressed, anguished, and continued wailing. As they tried to ascertain the possible causes, slowly they came to the place of the tigress. Over there they saw the tigress and the cubs, their mouths were besmeared with blood. They also saw human bones, nails, teeth, and hairs, and the ground was stained with blood all over in a mess.

So then the two princes having seen this, they were even more agonised and lost their normal sense of consciousness, fell down to the ground and readily soiled their bodies with dirt and mud as they rolled about. They were bereft of the right state of mind, and became somewhat mentally deranged.

Their guards and attendants upon seeing this, were also depressed and wept bitterly, and subsequently wailed aloud uncontrollably. They then splashed cold water on faces of the two princes, after which they began to regain their normal consciousness, and slowly they stood up.

At the time when the youngest prince was making the sacrifice of his life, it was exactly the time the queen and her retinue of some five hundred maids were having amusements with each other in the royal harem. The queen at that time had experienced milk flowed out from her two breasts, and there was so much pain in all the joints of bones of her body as if they were pricked by needles. She became apprehended and upset, seemingly like the loss of her beloved sons.

The queen thereafter rushed to where the King was at that time, and in her weak and soft voice, grievously and weepingly, she said to the King, “Great Lord of men, please listen carefully to me. The burning flame of worries and grief have set me ablaze today. Presently milk is flowing out of my two breasts, whilst my body is in agony and distress as if it is pricked by needles.

As I saw all these inauspicious signs, I became very much worried

that I might never again be seeing my beloved sons. I will readily give the Lord of men my own life, for quickly send the people out to search for my beloved sons.

I also had a dream wherein there were three dove-fledglings in my embrace, amongst which I cherished the most of the youngest one. Then I beheld a hawk suddenly snatched the youngest chick off from me. Having dreamed of such unpropitious event, it thenceforth brought about all my worries and anguishes. I am saddened and unnerved that life of my beloved son might not be saved. May the King please quickly dispatch the people to find out the fate of my beloved son."

Just then the queen having said that, passed out immediately and fell down to the floor. The King after hearing what has been said, also aroused worries and anguishes as he was afraid that he might not be able to see his beloved sons ever again, especially the youngest one.

The Ministers and the retinues of the King who were surrounding him at that time also wept in dolour, crying out so loud that it startled beings on earth and in heavens. At that time, the masses in the city having heard these loud dolorous wailings, all went outside the houses, and started to ask each other, "Are the princes presently still alive or are dead ? These princes, great beings, have always been speaking gently to others, are much adored by the commoners, is something difficult and rare to be seen nowadays."

Many people had already gone to search for the princes in the mountainous forest, and ere long they would come with the news. Those people at that time were so much pell-mell and crying out dolorously loud that the spirits and other supernatural beings were moved to grief.

At that time, the King stood up from his seat, besprinkled water on the face of his queen, who eventually regained her consciousness after quite some time. As she slowly recovered her right state of mind, feebly and softly, she asked the King, "Are my sons presently dead or are they still alive ?"

At that time, as the queen was longing so much to see her beloved sons again without ever wanting to give it up for a moment, she found herself even much rued and far more depressed. She murmured to herself thus :

“ It's a pity about my sons, who have the countenance of rectitude and strict propriety. How could it be now that they just passed away, leaving me behind ? Why is it not that I shall die first before they do, instead of having to see and go through all these things of anguishes and sufferings ?

My beloved sons are benevolent, whose appearances are wonderful as the immaculate lotus flower, and how could someone so mercilessly causing tragic harm to them that tore us apart ? Could it be because of my vindictive adversaries in my previous lives who are still harbouring enmity of those originally conditioned bad deeds that they wanted to do away with you sons ?

My beloved sons, whose face are immaculate like the full moon, to whom I don’t want (to hear about that) in case they were confronted tragically by the vindictive enemies. I would rather that it’s me with even my body being shattered into dusts, and never would I allow their lives be taken.

All those what I have seen in my dream, if they indeed have come true in effect, they directed callously straight at me, and how could I possibly endure all such agonies ? Like I have dreamt of my teeth falling out by themselves, and milk flowing out at the same time from both of my breasts, it surely must be that I am bound to lose my beloved sons. Also, because I dreamt of the three fledglings of dove, the youngest one was snatched off from me by a hawk, it bespeaks ill that amongst the three sons, I definitely would lose one, the youngest prince.”

At that time, the King said to the queen, “I now would ask the Chief Minister to send the official messengers to look everywhere for our sons. For now, you please don’t worry so much !”

The King having spoken gently and consolingly to the queen, reorganised his imperial horse-carriages, prepared to go out of the palace with his ministers. The King became worried and upset as he was innerly hard-pressed by melancholy and agony. Although he was right before his groups of people, his face looked haggard. Together with them, the King went out of the city to search for his beloved sons. At that time, there were also numerous other people following after the King and his entourage, sobbing grievously, so much so the earth’s supernatural beings were startled.

So then the King had left the city, looking everywhere in the four directions in search of his sons, but still had no idea where his sons

were. Then at long last, a courier was seen approaching from afar, whose head was covered with much dusts, clothing was stained with blood, and the body was smeared with mud, weeping in grief as he came closer.

King Mahāratha at that time, upon seeing this courier coming to him, he felt much more chagrined and anguished, cried out loud and wailed uncontrollably as he lifted his head up, looking at the firmament.

The minister whom the King has dispatched earlier on came towards the King and said, "May your majesty not be distressed. Your sons are still alive, and ere long they will be here to see you."

In the next instance, another minister came to report to the King. Seeing that his King was gaunt in his visage, and his clothing was besmeared with the filth of dust and sweat, he said thus to the King as follows :

"Your Majesty, please be informed that the youngest son is already dead. Although that your two sons are still alive, they looked very much distressed and wan that they are bereft of the reliant support. The third prince saw a tigress in dire starvation for about a week after having given birth to seven cubs, and he was worried that the starving tigress might devour the cubs. Having seen drastic situation of the tigress and her cubs, he was deeply compassionate towards them and resolved his mind resolutely that he would, as ever, endeavour to liberate all sentient beings from their tribulations, and vowed to attest to his noble bodhi in the subsequent life. He then went to a very high spot, jumped down to his death before the tigress. As the tigress was oppressed by extreme hunger, then ate him up, devoured all his fleshes and blood, except for his bones which still lie around on the ground."

So then the King having listened to this from the minister, once again he swooned, lost his mind-consciousness and fell down to the ground. The intense flame of worries and grief have set their bodies ablaze. Likewise, the same was with his ministers and groups of retinues that were around at that time.

They quickly besprinkled his face with water, and after quite a long while only then the King regained his consciousness, and once again he upraised his head, looking into the empyrean deep, continued weeping.

Then there was another minister coming for reporting to the King, and he said, "As we were walking inside the bamboo grove, we found the two princes, who were then wailing grievously as they seemed to have been affected by tremendous worries and grief. They appeared stupefied, were filled with confusion and fretfulness, and later fell to the ground as they passed out one after another. The minister and others quickly obtained some water and besprinkled their faces with it. After quite a while, then both of them began to regain their consciousness. We looked around us in the four directions, it was blazing intensely. The princes stood up briefly as we were holding them with our arms, and then again, they fell to the ground. With their heads upraised, looking at firmament, they wailed in dolour, and then suddenly we heard them giving praises to his youngest brother in respect of his great merits of virtues."

At that time, because the King having known that his beloved youngest son had parted from him forever, his mind was very much perplexed and fretful, his body was weary and enfeebled without strength, and being overwhelmed by worries and anguishes, he was weeping and at the same time thought to himself thus :

"The youngest son has always been my most beloved, but the 'mighty devil of impermanency' has suddenly devoured him. Although presently my other two sons are still alive, they are burnt by the blaze of worries and anguishes, and will they lose their lives because of all these bitter agonies that bechanced them?

I ought to quickly go to the bamboo grove, to bring them back to the palace. Their mother currently in the harem, is oppressed by worries and agonies, so much broken-hearted that she may have lose her life. But if she is able to see these two sons again, for them to console their mother, then she can be assured of living through the remaining part of her lifespan."

At that time, the King mounted his prominent elephant, and together with the royal guards and attendants, they went to the bamboo grove. Then at some point on their way in the grove, the King saw his two sons, wailing loud and lamenting the name of their youngest brother. The King immediately went up to them, embraced his two sons (by their heads) as the three of them wailed grievously together. They then returned to the palace following the same way as they came. Whilst they were back in the palace, the King quickly instructed the two sons to go see their mother.

The Buddha said to Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, "Now you ought to be aware that presently I, Śākyamuni Tathāgata, was formerly the youngest prince, Mahāsattva at that time who had made the sacrifice of his life for the tigress and her cubs. King Mahāratha at that time is presently the great King Śuddhodana. The Queen at that time is presently Queen Māyā. The eldest prince, Mahāpraṇāda at that time is presently Maitreya Bodhisattva. The second prince, Mahādeva at that time is presently Devadatta. The tigress at that time is presently Yaśodharā. The seven cubs of the tigress at that time are presently the five bhikṣus [119], and Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana."

At that time, King Mahāratha and his queen were wailing grievously, they then doffed their coats and necklaces, and together with all those amongst the retinue, they set forth to the bamboo grove to collect the relics of the youngest prince. Thereafter, a stūpa made of the seven kinds of jewels (inside which was kept the relics) was set up at that place. The youngest prince, Mahāsattva at that time when he was just about to make his self-sacrifice, had resolved his mind with a vow thus, 'May my relics that will be left behind, in the future periods throughout the numerous aeons that are beyond measure, always be the reason for performing deeds of the Buddhas by all those living beings.'

When the Buddha was nearing the end of giving elucidation to this sūtra, there were numerous myriads of divinities, and including humans, who have set their minds resolutely on the attainment of *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*.

The Buddha said to Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, "This is the reason why I was making obeisance to this stūpa." At that time, by virtue of the psychic power of the Buddha, this stūpa made of the seven kinds of jewels vanished without a trace.

Chapter 18 : Praise to all the Buddhas

At that time, there were hundreds of thousands innumerable Bodhisattvas and others who went from this world to the world of Suvarṇaratnā-karacchatrakūta Tathāgata [120]. Upon arriving, they prostrated with five parts of their bodies on the ground in paying homage to the Buddha, then they stood up and stayed on one side, held their palms together and said in unanimous voices in high exaltation of the Buddha :

> "Body of the Tathāgata resembles the splendid, wondrous colour of refined gold, whose brilliance radiating like the supreme golden mountain range [121]. His body is pure, soft and tender, resembling

[119] Viz. Ājñāta-Kauṇḍinya, Aśvajit, Bhadrika, Daśabala-Kāśyapa, Mahānāma-Kulika.

[120] It was possible only by virtue of the psychic power of the Tathāgata.

[121] That is, its effulgence is akin to that of the most pre-eminent amongst the seven golden ranges around Mount Sumeru.

the gold-coloured lotus flower.

The immeasurable wondrous attributes of his form are ascribed to his own incredible efforts of self-adornment. The extraordinary major and minor hallmarks embellish his body resplendently, and whose body is clean and pure like the purple-golden mountain range.

His state of mind is completely perfect in undefiledness, is akin to the pure full moon. His voice is limpid, likening to the brahmanic voice, the sound of lion's roar, the loud thunderclaps, the sound of Kalaviṅka bird, the sound of peacock [122] — the six kinds of limpid wonderful sounds.

The Tathāgata is purely enlightened without any degrees of defilement, and is perfectly abound with the awe-inspiring merits of virtues. The glorious adornment of his body encompasses the hundredfold kind of sublime merits of virtues.

Bright radiance of the Tathāgata shines in great distances, without the limits. The World-Honoured One is constantly in his imperturbable nirvāṇa, is utterly free from all those propensities of the multifarious desires.

The World-Honoured One is perfectly accomplished with the boundless merits of virtues, comparable to magnitude of the great briny, and that of Mount Sumeru. For the benefits and well-being of all sentient beings, within Him is always begotten the great compassion, and at some point in the future periods, he would accord them the ultimate bliss.

The most excellent, profound signations of teaching of the Tathāgata, truly capacitate all living beings to be awakened to the inner quiescence and peacefulness of nirvāṇic state. The profound meanings of the Tathāgata's instructions can furnish all living beings with the ultimate happiness

The Tathāgata can promulgate the peerless nectar-analogue wonderful teachings, can formulate the unparalleled nectar-analogue wonderful methods and expedients of practices, can let practitioners be meditatively absorbed in afflictions-free and

[122] Herein the sixth is not mentioned in the text. Other sūtras have also include 帝釋妙音、大鼓音聲、拘枳羅鳥聲、共命鳥聲、海潮音聲。The last one is regularly mentioned, namely sound of the ocean-tide.

imperturbable (dhyānas) in caverns and other dwelling places, can liberate all sentient beings, and deliver all those beings in the three spheres of existence from the endless seas of sufferings so as they will be able to dwells fixed in the right path of awakening, and to free themselves of melancholies and agonies.

The supreme wisdom, the collection of virtuous merits, the strength of great compassion, and the painstaking means of expedient of practices of the Tathāgata, the World-Honoured One, all these are just immeasurable ! We Bodhisattvas cannot presently speak of knowing any of them quantifiably. Even those divinities, and also humans, to the exhaustion of their deliberation throughout the myriads of aeons, they still will not be able to know even as little as a drop of the boundless brinies of wisdom and collection of the virtuous merits of the Tathāgata.

What I and the rest presently extolled of the collection of virtuous merits of the Tathāgata is but mere brevity, for I never will be able to know even a hundredth of it, nor even a thousandth or a millionth or a billionth of it. But if I have herein amassed some merit of virtues in praise of the Tathāgata, I would like to dedicate it to all sentient beings, and wish for their attainment ere long in the path of unsurpassed enlightenment."

At that time, Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva stood up from his seat in the midst of the assembly, drew the upper garment over his left shoulder, knelt on his right knee, clasped his hands together, and said in praise of the Bhagavat, Śākyamuni Tathāgata :

The World-Honoured One is complete with the excellent and wonderful hallmarks of hundred kinds of sublime virtuous merits, is physically adorned with thousands of millions of myriad merits of virtues [123] . Radiance emanating from the immaculate appearance of the World-Honoured One shines distantly, is always seen admirably by others without ever getting bored of it. It is likened to the thousands of myriad sun's rays that suffuse the sky, and its brightness shines without bounds.

Its brilliance is also likened to the assemblage of the numerous rare and precious jewels which radiate in the colours of blue, red, crimson, white, and yellow. It also resembles the mix of lapis lazulis and crystals, like radiance of the molten refined gold.

[123] The phrase " 功德千數 " is abridged. It should be understood as "hundreds of thousands of milliards of innumerable" virtuous merits of the Buddha.

Brilliance of the Tathāgata shines thoroughly to all those mountain ranges, and its shine is also able to reach as far as all those numerous worlds of the other Buddhas. Brilliance radiating from the Tathāgata can dispel the numerous various agonies of sentient beings, and can also accord them the exceptional, wonderful blissfulness.

The Tathāgata is utterly purified in all senses and spiritual faculties, perfect with the wondrous finest qualities, and many others who look at them will never get enough of it. His hair is dark purplish, like colours of the neck of a peacock, and it's also looked like a lotus flower on which are gathered all those queen wasps.

The Tathāgata's pure nature of the great compassion adorns his field of the merits of virtues, as well as those other virtuous merits encompassing his myriad samādhis, pure great benevolence and so on, are all attributed to his conscientious amassment of them. The extraordinary and wonderful corporeal marks gloriously adorn his physical form, and the myriad various kinds of his accumulated merits of virtues, have collectively facilitated his unsurpassed supreme enlightenment.

The Tathāgata is capable of subduing the various mulish and wilful minds of living beings, to render them state of pliancy necessary for the right cultivation so that they will be able to experience true happiness in due course. The collective adornment of the various kinds of his wonderful, profound virtuous merits is unanimously lauded by all the other Buddhas in the ten directions of space.

The Tathāgata's radiance shines forth to far distances, permeating all over the different places, is akin to the sun's rays and moonlight that suffuse completely the vast expanse of the sky. The completeness of his accomplishment of the merits of virtues is likened to that of Mount Sumeru, is capable of manifesting everywhere as he wishes in all those other worlds.

The Tathāgata's teeth are even and closely spaced, are white as the snow-white jade. His countenance evinces the homage-inspiring virtues, is likened to the sun that is evident in the sky. Sign of the curl of hairs between his eyebrows that swirls to the right, emanates bright radiance is likened to that radiating from the pure crystals and pearls, and colour of the radiance-emitting urṇākeśa is splendid as the sun that is evident in the sky."

At that time, Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree said in verses :

" Homage to Śākyamuni Tathāgata, who is perfect with the taintless, unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment. The splendid and profound teaching of the Tathāgata is attuned flexibly to the varying enlightened levels of beings, is for keeping themselves far off from fixating with the objects of wrongful teachings and heterodox paths [124] that do not cohere with true instructions of the Tathāgata, so that they will become uniquely special and be the best among the outstanding ones for realising unsurpassed supreme enlightenment of Buddhahood.

(The Tathāgata is all-knowing of whatsoever states of being and states in the offing, but the Tathāgata has not fondly laid hold of nor the least predisposed himself toward all those states of existence and impending existences.) [125] In a word as what the verse denotes, we say without exception that the Tathāgata knows clearly all those past, present and future existences, but indeed it is not exactly correct to say that the Tathāgata knows and thinks of all of these really as they are, is therefore the reason for saying that the Tathāgata constantly and perfectly accords with his spotless fundamental nature.

Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest, those merits of virtues of the Tathāgata ! Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest, the briny of supreme wisdom of the Tathāgata ! Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest, collection of the virtuous merits of the Tathāgata is akin to magnitude of the Mount Sumeru ! Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest, altruistic deeds of the Tathāgata is without limits ! Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest, appearance of the Śākyamuni Tathāgata in this world is comparable to the scarcely seen uḍumbara flowers, manifest only for a very short period of time ! Absolutely rare ! Truly rarest the Śākyamuni Tathāgata, who is imbued with the limitless great compassion, bearing resemblance to the sunshine on which humans rely !

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[124] True practitioners do not fixate themselves doggedly either with any objects of the Buddha's true instruction or attributes of the different orthodox paths, for otherwise they will remain as the varying degrees of one's own craving, passion, greed, and aversion. The other vital words are omitted in the four-character verse originally as " 非法非道 ". It should have been instead " 遠離一切非法、非非法、非道、非非道 ". In other words, " 無法相，亦無非法相，無住一切相而生其心，是名無上正等覺 。"

[125] Thinking, saying, doing whatsoever things of virtues without at any moment holding dear to them or in hope for the return of any favour,

The Tathāgata expounds this wonderful, treasured sūtra for the benefits of all sentient beings. Absolutely excellent of the Tathāgata who have put to extinction of the manifestations of unwholesomeness of his cognitive senses and faculties, and thenceforth roamed into the great "city" of perfect cessation of all mental ills [126] , abided in the extremely deep state of *samādhi* that is free from all mental taints, and entered upon the common locus of mental functioning of all Buddhas [127].

All disciples of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas ought to fully comprehend that their body and mind are essentially conforming with the nature of insubstantiality, for the World's Most Honoured One among the two-legged beings is likewise the same with respect to his locus of mental functioning.

In like manner with the myriads of all other dharmas, by ascertaining the characteristics of their very fundamental nature, they are all originally nirvāṇic. And likewise with all sentient beings, the intrinsic characteristic of their very fundamental nature is also chimed in perfectly with the nature of insubstantiality [128]. but it's just because of their presumptuousness and ignorance that they remain unenlightened as ever.

I have always brought to mind names of the Buddhas, always delightful to behold all those Bhagavats, and I have always resolved my mind not to part myself from teachings of the Buddhas, with the later being analogous to the vital sunshine.

I have always knelt on the ground for a long time, enamouredly yearning for seeing the Buddhas. I have always endeavoured the practice of superlative great compassion, whereby I used to weep with tears flowing down my cheeks like those continuing raindrops. Often, I admirably pine for seeing the Buddhas, so much so that the flame of anguishes is constantly burning within me. May the World-Honoured One be so compassionate to bestow upon me the cooling water for putting out the blaze of my ignorance.

The World-Honoured One is endued with great mercy and benevolence for all sentient beings, for which your great

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[126] Herein the term " 善寂 " means *parinirvāṇa* of all delusions of the mind.

[127] The "locus of mental functioning" of all Buddhas is also mentioned in Chapter 1 and 13, is referring to the fundamentally enlightened dharma-nature (*dharmatā*), i.e. the original Buddha-nature (*buddhatā*) of all beings.

[128] It means *śūnyata* in Sanskrit, or in Chinese, " 空性 ".

compassion is boundless, and I therefore wish that you would bestow on this body of mine the ability to frequently see the Buddhas. On ground of the World-Honoured Ones frequently protect all those divinities and humans, is the reason why I presently long for beholding them.

Corporeal bodies of the Śrāvakas bear resemblance to empty space in the sky, mirages, illusions, reverberations, transformations, are like moon reflecting in the clear water. The commonly delusive nature of living beings is akin to all what are seen in the dreams.

The locus of mental functioning of the Tathāgata is pure as the crystal, is consummation in the unsurpassed (supreme enlightenment), provenance of the nectar-analogue wonderful teachings, which can accord all sentient beings the boundless true happiness.

The locus of mental functioning of the Tathāgata is wonderful and extremely profound, is beyond what can be fathomed by all living beings, nor can it be comprehended completely by all those deities who are endowed with the five kinds of supernatural powers, nor by all those Śrāvaka disciples and Pratyekabuddhas. As of now, I am without doubt about the locus of mental functioning of all Tathāgatas, and I only hope that the World-Honoured One out of compassion will kindly manifest his body at my behest." [129]

At that time, the World-Honoured One emerged from his *samādhi*, and with an exquisite voice, commended, "Excellent ! Very good, virtuous devī ! Today you have heartily spoken out, and when all those beings hear about this teaching, they will be able to gain insight into way of practice regarding the acquiescent state of non-generation of their delusory mental constructs [130] ."

[129] It's because this discourse was instructed in the Tathāgata's *samādhi*, and devī of the Bodhi Tree wanted to see the physical *nirmāṇakāya* of Śākyamuni Tathāgata.

[130] The term " 無生 " is to be followed by " 無滅 ", Hence 無生無滅 denotes the sagely state of " 無生忍 ", or called " 無生法忍 ", or in Sanskrit as *anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*.

Chapter 19 : Entrustment Given by Śākyamuni Buddha

At that time, Śākyamuni Buddha having emerged from his *samādhi*, exercised his great supernormal power, extended his right hand, (transformed into myriads of them,) and touched on the crown of the heads of all those Bodhisattvas, the four world-guarding celestial Monarchs, Nāgarājas, Saṃjñeya great commander of the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others, and said, "I have in the past hundreds of thousands of millions of milliards of aeons as numerous as there are the total grains of sand in the Ganges River, practised the significations of what is contained in this splendid, wonderful sūtra, and it behoves all of you to recite, explain for others, spread abroad, and uphold this teaching, in order that it will not one day be discontinued or lost altogether in the regions of Jambudvīpa. If there are virtuous men and virtuous women in the future periods who are able to recite this sūtra, practise the vital principles of it, and uphold it, all ye divinities should always guard and protect them, for it must be known that these kinds of beings in the hundreds of thousands of myriad ages in the future, will always be going through happy lives by being born as humans and divinities, and they will also be able to meet with those other many Buddhas throughout the numerous aeons in the future, and will ere long attain *anuttara-samyaksaṃbodhi*."

Just then all those Mahā-bodhisattvas, divinities, Nāgarājas, Saṃjñeya great commander of the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others, rose from their seats forthwith, went to the front of the Buddha, prostrated with five parts of their bodies on the ground, and said together thus, "As instructed by the World-Honoured One, we would reverently observe it and act on it." And in this way they said it thrice, "As instructed by the World-Honoured One, we would reverently observe it and act on it." So then Saṃjñeya Mahāyakṣa, the great commander of the Yakṣas, and together with others, they said to the Buddha, "As the World-Honoured One instructed, if there are beings in the future periods who are able to recite ithis teaching, explain it for others, observe and uphold it, or whether they write new copies of it, or ask someone else to make copies of it, I and the twenty-eight groups of Yakṣas and others would always accompany them and give them protection whilst at the same time making ourselves invisible, and would also ensure that those expounders of this teaching will have all their ills and troubles dispelled, and be able to live with inner peace and happiness. May the World-Honoured One not be worried."

At that time, Śākyamuni Buddha availed of his great supernormal power which brought about six kinds of quaking in all those world-systems throughout the ten directions of space, and the Buddhas in all those world-systems were very much delighted as they knew about the entrustment given by the Buddha. Availed of his great supernormal power once more, Śākyamuni Buddha made commendations to all those divinities and humans who have observed and upheld this teaching. So then there were the innumerable myriads

of Mahā-bodhisattvas, along with Ruchiraketu Bodhisattva, Suvarṇaprabhā Bodhisattva, Suvarṇagarbha Bodhisattva, Sadākaruṇā Bodhisattva, Dharmodgata Bodhisattva, and the four world-guarding Celestial Monarchs, the ten thousand Devaputras, as well as Divinity of the Bodhimaṇḍala Bodhi Tree, Dṛḍhapṛthivī Devatā, and all those other worldly beings as humans, deities, Asuras, and others, having listened to the sermons given by the Buddha, set mind resolutely on the ultimate Path of the unsurpassed suprene enlightenment. They were all overjoyed, made their obeisance to the Buddha, and then they left.

~ End of translation ~

Chinese canonical text of the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra

金光明經

北涼三藏法師 曇無讖譯

（大正藏，No. 663）

卷一

序品第一
壽量品第二
懺悔品第三
讚歎品第四
空品第五

卷二

四天王品第六
大辯天神品第七
功德天品第八
堅牢地神品第九

卷三

散脂鬼神品第十
正論品第十一
善集品第十二
鬼神品第十三
授記品第十四
除病品第十五

卷四

流水長者子品第十六
捨身品第十七
讚佛品第十八
囑累品第十九

金光明經卷第一

序品第一

如是我聞：一時佛住王舍大城耆闍崛山。是時如來遊於無量甚深法性諸佛行處，過諸菩薩所行清淨。是金光明，諸經之王。若有聞者，則能思惟 無上微妙，甚深之義。

如是經典，常為四方，四佛世尊，之所護持：
東方阿閦、南方寶相、西無量壽、北微妙聲。
我今當說，懺悔等法，所生功德，為無有上；
能壞諸苦，盡不善業，一切種智，而為根本；
無量功德，之所莊嚴；滅除諸苦，與無量樂。
諸根不具、壽命損減、貧窮困苦、諸天捨離、
親厚鬪訟、王法所加、各各忿諍、財物損耗、
愁憂恐怖、惡星災異、眾邪蠱道、變怪相續、
臥見惡夢、晝則愁惱，當淨洗浴，聽是經典，

至心清淨，著淨絜衣，專聽諸佛，甚深行處。
是經威德，能悉消除　如是諸惡，令其寂滅。
護世四王、將諸官屬、並及無量　夜叉之眾，
悉來擁護，持是經者。大辯天神、尼連河神、
鬼子母神、地神堅牢、大梵尊天、三十三天、
大神龍王、緊那羅王、迦樓羅王、阿修羅王、
與其眷屬，悉共至彼，擁護是人，晝夜不離。
我今所說，諸佛世尊，甚深祕密，微妙行處，
億百千劫，甚難得值。若得聞經、若為他說、
若心隨喜、若設供養，如是之人，於無量劫，
常為諸天、八部所敬。如是修行，生功德者，
得不思議，無量福聚；亦為十方，諸佛世尊、
深行菩薩　之所護持。著淨衣服、以上妙香，
慈心供養，常不遠離；身意清淨，無諸垢穢，
歡喜悅豫，深樂是典。若得聽聞，當知善得，
人身人道，及以正命；若聞懺悔，執持在心，
是上善根，諸佛所讚。

壽量品第二

爾時，王舍城中有菩薩摩訶薩名曰信相，已曾供養過去無量億那由他百千諸佛，種諸善根。是信相菩薩作是思惟：「何因何緣，釋迦如來壽命短促方八十年？」復更念言：「如佛所說，有二因緣壽命得長。何等為二？一者不殺、二者施食。而我世尊，於無量百千億那由他阿僧祇劫，修不殺戒、具足十善，飲食惠施不可限量，乃至己身骨髓肉血，充足飽滿飢餓眾生，況餘飲食。」

大士如是至心念佛，思是義時，其室自然廣博嚴事，天紺琉璃種種眾寶，雜廁間錯以成其地，猶如如來所居淨土，有妙香氣過諸天香，煙雲垂布遍滿其室。其室四面，各有四寶上妙高座自然而出，純以天衣而為敷具，是妙座上各有諸佛所受用華，眾寶合成。於蓮華上有四如來：東方名阿閦、南方名寶相、西方名無量壽、北方名微妙聲。是四如來自然而坐師子座上，放大光明照王舍城，及此三千大千世界，乃至十方恒河沙等諸佛世界，雨諸天華，作天伎樂。

爾時，三千大千世界所有眾生，以佛神力受天快樂，諸根不具即得具足。舉要言之，一切世間所有利益未曾有事，悉具出現。

爾時，信相菩薩見是諸佛及稀有事，歡喜踴躍恭敬合掌向諸世尊，至心念佛，作是思惟：「釋迦如來無量功德，唯壽命中心生疑惑。云何如來壽命如是方八十年？」

爾時，四佛以正遍知告信相菩薩：「善男子！汝今不應思量如來壽命短促。何以故？善男子！我等不見諸天、世人、魔眾、梵眾、沙門、婆羅門人，及非人，有能思算如來壽量，知其齊限，唯除如來。」

時四如來，將欲宣暢釋迦文佛所得壽命，欲、色界天諸龍鬼神、乾闥婆、阿脩羅、迦樓羅、緊那羅、摩睺羅伽，及無量百千億那由他菩薩摩訶薩，以佛神力悉來聚集信相菩薩摩訶薩室。

爾時，四佛於大眾中略以偈喻說釋迦如來所得壽量，而作頌曰：

「一切諸水，可知幾滴，無有能數，釋尊壽命。
諸須彌山，可知斤兩，無有能量，釋尊壽命。
一切大地，可知塵數，無有能算，釋尊壽命。
虛空分界，尚可盡邊，無有能計，釋尊壽命。
不可計劫，億百千萬，佛壽如是，無量無邊。
以是因緣，故說二緣，不害物命、施食無量。
是故大士，壽不可計，無量無邊，亦無齊限。
是故汝今，不應於佛　無量壽命，而生疑惑。」

爾時，信相菩薩摩訶薩聞是四佛宣說如來壽命無量，深心信解，歡喜踴躍。說是如來壽量品時，無量無邊阿僧祇眾生，發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心。時四如來忽然不現。

懺悔品第三

爾時，信相菩薩即於其夜夢見金鼓，其狀姝大，其明普照喻如日光；復於光中得見十方無量無邊諸佛世尊，眾寶樹下坐琉璃座，與無量百千眷屬圍繞而為說法。見有一人似婆羅門，以枹擊鼓出大音聲，其聲演說懺悔偈頌。

時信相菩薩從夢寤已，至心憶念夢中所聞懺悔偈頌，過夜至旦出王舍城。爾時亦有無量無邊百千眾生，與菩薩俱往耆闍崛山至於佛所。至佛所已，頂禮佛足，右繞三匝，卻坐一面，敬心合掌，瞻仰尊顏，目不暫捨，以其夢中所見金鼓及懺悔偈，向如來說：

「昨夜所夢，至心憶持。夢見金鼓，妙色晃耀，
其光大盛，明踰於日，遍照十方，恒沙世界。
又因此光，得見諸佛，眾寶樹下，坐琉璃座，
無量大眾，圍繞說法。見婆羅門，擊是金鼓，
其鼓音中，說如是偈：
『是大金鼓，所出妙音，悉能滅除，三世諸苦，
地獄餓鬼、畜生等苦，貧窮困苦，及諸有苦。
是鼓所出，微妙之音，能除眾生，諸惱所逼，

斷眾怖畏，令得無懼，猶如諸佛，得無所畏。
諸佛聖人，所成功德，離於生死，到大智岸；
如是眾生，所得功德，定及助道，猶如大海。
是鼓所出，如是妙音，令眾生得，梵音深遠；
證佛無上　菩提勝果；轉無上輪，微妙清淨；
住壽無量　不思議劫；演說正法，利益眾生；
能害煩惱，消除諸苦；貪瞋癡等，悉令寂滅。
若有眾生，處在地獄，大火熾然，燒炙其身。
若聞金鼓，微妙音聲，所出言教，即尋禮佛。
亦令眾生，得知宿命，百生千生、千萬億生；
令心正念　諸佛世尊；亦聞無上　微妙之言。
是金鼓中，所出妙音，復令眾生　值遇諸佛；
遠離一切　諸惡業等；善修無量　白淨之業。
諸天世人，及餘眾生，隨其所思　諸所願求，
如是金鼓　所出之音，皆悉能令　成就具足。
若有眾生　墮大地獄，猛火炎熾　焚燒其身，
無有救護，流轉諸難，當令是等　悉滅諸苦。
若有眾生，諸苦所切，三惡道報，及以人中，
如是金鼓　所出之音，悉能滅除　一切諸苦。
無依無歸，無有救護，我為是等　作歸依處。
是諸世尊，今當證知，久已於我　生大悲心，
在在處處，十方諸佛，現在世雄，兩足之尊，
我本所作　惡不善業，今者懺悔：諸十力前，
不識諸佛，及父母恩；不解善法，造作眾惡；
自恃種姓　及諸財寶，盛年放逸，作諸惡行；
心念不善，口作惡業；隨心所作，不見其過；
凡夫愚行，無知闇覆，親近惡友，煩惱亂心；
五欲因緣，心生忿恚，不知厭足，故作眾惡；
親近非聖，因生慳嫉，貧窮因緣，奸諂作惡；
繫屬於他，常有怖畏，不得自在，而造諸惡。
貪欲恚癡，擾動其心，渴愛所逼，造作眾惡；
依因衣食，及以女色，諸結惱熱，造作眾惡；
身口意惡，所集三業，如是眾罪，今悉懺悔。
或不恭敬，佛法聖眾，如是眾罪，今悉懺悔。
或不恭敬，緣覺菩薩，如是眾罪，今悉懺悔。
以無智故，誹謗正法；不知恭敬　父母尊長；
如是眾罪，今悉懺悔。愚惑所覆，驕慢放逸，
因貪恚癡，造作諸惡；如是眾罪，今悉懺悔。
我今供養　無量無邊，三千大千　世界諸佛；

我當拔濟　十方一切　無量眾生，所有諸苦；
我當安止，不可思議　阿僧祇眾，令住十地；
已得安止，住十地者，悉令具足　如來正覺。
為一眾生，億劫修行，使無量眾，令度苦海；
我當為是　諸眾生等，演說微妙　甚深悔法。
所謂金光，滅除諸惡，千劫所作，極重惡業，
若能至心，一懺悔者，如是眾罪，悉皆滅盡。
我今已說　懺悔之法，是金光明，清淨微妙，
速能滅除　一切業障；我當安止，住於十地，
十種珍寶，以為腳足，成佛無上，功德光明，
令諸眾生，度三有海。諸佛所有，甚深法藏，
不可思議　無量功德，一切種智，願悉具足；
百千禪定、根力覺道，不可思議　諸陀羅尼，
十力世尊，我當成就。諸佛世尊　有大慈悲，
當證微誠，哀受我悔。若我百劫　所作眾惡，
以是因緣，生大憂苦，貧窮困乏、愁熱驚懼、
怖畏惡業、心常怯劣，在在處處，暫無歡樂；
十方現在，大悲世尊，能除眾生　一切怖畏，
願當受我　誠心懺悔，令我恐懼　悉得消除；
我之所有，煩惱業垢，惟願現在，諸佛世尊，
以大悲水，洗除令淨。過去諸惡，今悉懺悔；
現所作罪，誠心發露；所未作者，更不敢作；
已作之業，不敢覆藏。身業三種，口業有四，
意三業行，今悉懺悔；身口所作，及以意思，
十種惡業，一切懺悔。遠離十惡，修行十善，
安止十住，逮十力尊。所造惡業，應受惡報，
今於佛前，誠心懺悔。若此國土，及餘世界，
所有善法，悉以迴向。我所修行，身口意業，
願於來世，證無上道。若在諸有，六趣險難，
愚癡無智，造作眾惡，今於佛前，皆悉懺悔。
世間所有　生死險難，種種婬欲，愚煩惱難，
如是諸難，我今懺悔。心輕躁難、近惡友難、
三有險難，及三毒難、遇無難難、值好時難、
修功德難、值佛亦難，如是諸難，今悉懺悔。
諸佛世尊，我所依止，是故我今　敬禮佛海；
金色晃耀，猶如須彌，是故我今　頂禮最勝。
其色無上，如天真金；眼目清淨，如紺琉璃；
功德威神，名稱顯著；佛日大悲，滅一切闇，
善淨無垢，離諸塵翳；無上佛日　大光普照；

煩惱火熾，令心焦熱，唯佛能除，如月清涼；
三十二相，八十種好，莊嚴其身，視之無厭；
功德巍巍，明網顯耀，安住三界，如日照世；
猶如琉璃，淨無瑕穢，妙色廣大，種種各異；
其色紅赤，如日初出，頗梨白銀，校飾光網，
如是種種，莊嚴佛日。三有之中，生死大海，
潦水波蕩，惱亂我心，其味苦毒，最為麁澁；
如來網明，能令枯涸。妙身莊嚴，相好殊特，
金色光明，遍照一切；智慧大海，彌滿三界，
是故我今　稽首敬禮。如大海水，其量難知，
大地微塵，不可稱計；諸須彌山，難可度量，
虛空邊際，亦不可得；諸佛亦爾，功德無量。
一切有心，無能知者。於無量劫，極心思惟，
不能得知　佛功德邊。大地諸山，尚可知量；
毛滴海水，亦可知數；諸佛功德，無能知者。
相好莊嚴，名稱讚歎，如是功德，令眾皆得。
我以善業，諸因緣故，來世不久，成於佛道，
講宣妙法，利益眾生，度脫一切，無量諸苦；
摧伏諸魔，及其眷屬，轉於無上，清淨法輪；
住壽無量　不思議劫；充足眾生，甘露法味；
我當具足，六波羅蜜，猶如過佛　之所成就，
斷諸煩惱，除一切苦，悉滅貪欲，及恚癡等；
我當憶念　宿命之事，百生千生、千萬億生，
常當至心，正念諸佛，所說微妙，無上正法。
我因善業，常值諸佛，遠離諸惡，修諸善業；
一切世界　所有眾生，無量苦惱，我當悉滅。
若有眾生，諸根毀壞，不具足者，悉令具足；
十方世界，所有病苦，羸瘦頓乏、無救護者，
悉令解脫　如是諸苦，還得勢力，平復如本。
若犯王法，臨當刑戮，無量怖畏，愁憂苦惱，
如是之人，悉令解脫。若受鞭撻，繫縛枷鎖，
種種苦事，逼切其身，無量百千　愁憂驚畏，
種種恐懼，擾亂其心；如是無邊　諸苦惱等，
願使一切，悉得解脫。若有眾生，飢渴所惱，
令得種種，甘美飲食。盲者得視；聾者得聽；
瘂者得言；裸者得衣；貧窮之者，即得寶藏，
倉庫盈溢，無所乏少；一切皆受，安隱快樂，
乃至無有　一人受苦。眾生相視，和顏悅色；
形貌端嚴，人所喜見；心常思念　他人善事；

飲食飽滿，功德具足。隨諸眾生　之所思念，
皆願令得　種種伎樂：箜篌箏笛、琴瑟鼓吹，
如是種種　微妙音聲。江河池沼、流泉諸水，
金華遍佈，及優鉢羅。隨諸眾生　之所思念，
即得種種　衣服飲食、錢財珍寶、金銀琉璃、
真珠璧玉、雜廁瓔珞。願諸眾生　不聞惡聲，
乃至無有　可惡見者。願諸眾生　色貌微妙，
各各相於，共相愛念；世間所有　資生之具，
隨其所念，悉令具足。願諸眾生，諸所求索，
如其所須，應念即得；香華諸樹，常於三時，
雨細末香，及塗身香；眾生受者，歡喜快樂。
願諸眾生　常得供養　不可思議　十方諸佛，
無上妙法，清淨無垢，及諸菩薩、聲聞大眾。
願諸眾生　常得遠離　三惡八難，值無難處，
覲覩諸佛，無上之王。願諸眾生，常生尊貴，
多饒財寶，安隱豐樂；上妙色像，莊嚴其身，
功德成就，有大名稱。願諸女人，皆成男子，
具足智慧，精勤不懈；一切皆行，菩薩之道，
勤心修習　六波羅蜜；常見十方，無量諸佛，
坐寶樹下，琉璃座上，安住禪定，自在快樂，
演說正法，眾所樂聞。若我現在，及過去世，
所作惡業，諸有險難，應得惡果；不適意者，
願悉滅盡，令無有餘。若諸眾生，三有繫縛，
生死羅網，彌密堅固，願以智刀，割斷破裂，
除諸苦惱，早成菩提。若此閻浮，及餘他方，
無量世界，所有眾生　所作種種，善妙功德，
我今深心，隨其歡喜。我今以此　隨喜功德，
及身口意　所作善業，願於來世，成無上道，
得淨無垢，吉祥果報。若有敬禮，讚歎十力，
信心清淨，無諸疑網，能作如是　所說懺悔，
便得超越　六十劫罪。諸善男子，及善女人，
諸王剎利、婆羅門等，若有恭敬，合掌向佛，
稱歎如來，並讚此偈，在在生處，常識宿命，
諸根具足，清淨端嚴，種種功德，悉皆成就；
在在處處，常為國王、輔相大臣　之所恭敬；
非於一佛、五佛十佛，種諸功德，聞是懺悔。
若於無量　百千萬億，諸佛如來，種諸善根，
然後乃得　聞是懺悔。」

讚歎品第四

爾時，佛告地神堅牢：「善女天！過去有王名金龍尊，常以讚歎。讚歎去來現在諸佛：

『我今尊重，敬禮讚歎，去來現在　十方諸佛。
諸佛清淨，微妙寂滅，色中上色，金光照耀；
於諸聲中，佛聲最上，猶如大梵，深遠雷音；
其髮紺黑，光螺焰起，蜂翠孔雀，色不得喻；
其齒鮮白，猶如珂雪，顯發金顏，分齊分明；
其目脩廣，清淨無垢，如青蓮華，映水開敷；
舌相廣長，形色紅輝，光明照耀，如華初生；
眉間毫相，白如珂月，右旋潤澤，如淨琉璃；
眉細脩揚，形如月初，其色黑耀，過於蜂王；
鼻高圓直，如鑄金鋌，微妙柔軟，當於面門；
如來勝相　次第最上，得味真正，無與等者；
一一毛孔，一毛旋生，軟細紺青，猶孔雀項。
即於生時，身放大光，普照十方，無量國土，
滅盡三界，一切諸苦，令諸眾生，悉受快樂；
地獄畜生，及以餓鬼，諸人天等，安隱無患，
悉滅一切，無量惡趣。身色微妙，如融金聚；
面貌清淨，如月盛滿；佛身明耀，如日初出；
進止威儀，猶如師子；脩臂下垂，立過於膝，
猶如風動　娑羅樹枝；圓光一尋，能照無量，
猶如聚集　百千日月；佛身淨妙，無諸垢穢，
其明普照，一切佛剎；佛光巍巍，明焰熾盛，
悉能隱蔽，無量日月；佛日燈炬，照無量界，
皆令眾生，尋光見佛。本所修習，百千行業，
聚集功德，莊嚴佛身，臂脩纖圓，如象王鼻；
手足淨軟，敬愛無厭；去來諸佛，數如微塵，
現在諸佛，亦復如是；如是如來，我今悉禮。
身口清淨，意亦如是，以妙香華，供養奉獻，
百千功德，讚詠歌歎；設以百舌，於千劫中，
歎佛功德，不能得盡；如來所有，現世功德，
種種深固，微妙第一，設復千舌，欲讚一佛，
尚不能盡　功德少分，況欲歎美　諸佛功德？
大地及天，以為大海，乃至有頂，滿其中水，
尚以一毛，知其滴數，無有能知，佛一功德。
我今以禮，讚歎諸佛，身口意業　悉皆清淨，
一切所修，無量善業，與諸眾生，證無上道。

如是人王，讚歎佛已，復作如是，無量誓願：
『若我來世，無量無邊　阿僧祇劫，在在生處，
常於夢中，見妙金鼓，得聞懺悔，深奧之聲。
今所讚歎，面貌清淨，願我來世　亦得如是。
諸佛功德　不可思議，於百千劫，甚難得值；
願於當來，無量之世，夜則夢見，晝如實說。
我當具足　修行六度，濟拔眾生，越於苦海，
然後我身，成無上道，令我世界，無與等者。
奉貢金鼓，讚佛因緣，以此果報，當來之世，
值釋迦佛，得受記莂：並令二子，金龍金光，
常生我家，同共受記。若有眾生，無救護者，
眾苦逼切，無所依止，我於當來，為是等輩，
作大救護，及依止處，能除眾苦，悉令滅盡，
施與眾生，諸善安樂。我未來世，行菩薩道，
不計劫數，如盡本際；以此金光，懺悔因緣，
使我惡海，及以業海、煩惱大海，悉竭無餘；
我功德海，願悉成就；智慧大海，清淨具足；
無量功德，助菩提道，猶如大海，珍寶具足。
以此金光，懺悔力故，菩提功德，光明無礙，
慧光無垢，照徹清淨。我當來世，身光普照，
功德威神，光明焰盛，於三界中，最勝殊特；
諸功德力，無所減少，當度眾生，越於苦海，
並復安置，功德大海。來世多劫，行菩提道，
如昔諸佛，行菩提者。三世諸佛，淨妙國土；
諸佛至尊，無量功德；令我來世，得此殊異，
功德淨土，如佛世尊。』
信相當知，爾時國王，金龍尊者，則汝身是；
爾時二子，金龍金光，今汝二子，銀相等是。」

空品第五

「無量餘經，已廣說空，是故此中，略而解說。
眾生根鈍，斟於智慧，不能廣知，無量空義，
故此尊經，略而說之；異妙方便，種種因緣，
為鈍根故，起大悲心，今我演說，此妙經典。
如我所解，知眾生意，是身虛偽，猶如空聚；
六入村落，結賊所止，一切自住，各不相知。
眼根受色；耳分別聲；鼻嗅諸香；舌嗜於味；
所有身根，貪受諸觸；意根分別，一切諸法；

六情諸根，各各自緣　諸塵境界，不行他緣。
心如幻化，馳騁六情，而常妄想，分別諸法；
猶如世人，馳走空聚，六賊所害，愚不知避。
心常依止，六根境界，各各自知，所伺之處，
隨行色聲　香味觸法。心處六情，如鳥投網，
其心在在，常處諸根，隨逐諸塵，無有暫捨。
身空虛偽，不可長養，無有諍訟，亦無正主；
從諸因緣，和合而有，無有堅實，妄想故起。
業力機關，假為空聚，地水火風，合集成立，
隨時增減，共相殘害；猶如四蛇，同處一篋，
四大蚖蛇，其性各異，二上二下，諸方亦二，
如是蛇大，悉滅無餘。地水二蛇，其性沈下；
風火二蛇，性輕上升；心識二性，躁動不停；
隨業受報　人天諸趣，隨所作業　而墮諸有。
水火風種，散滅壞時，大小不淨，盈流於外；
體生諸蟲，無可愛樂；捐棄塚間，如朽敗木。
善女當觀，諸法如是，何處有人，及以眾生？
本性空寂，無明故有；如是諸大，一一不實，
本自不生，性無和合。以是因緣，我說諸大，
從本不實，和合而有；無明體相，本自不有，
妄想因緣，和合而有；無所有故，假名無明，
是故我說，名曰無明、行識名色、六入觸受、
愛取有生、老死愁惱；眾苦行業，不可思議，
生死無際，輪轉不息。本無有生，亦無和合，
不善思惟，心行所造。我斷一切　諸見纏等，
以智慧刀　裂煩惱網；五陰舍宅，觀悉空寂，
證無上道，微妙功德；開甘露門、示甘露器、
入甘露城、處甘露室，令諸眾生，食甘露味；
吹大法螺、擊大法鼓、然大法炬、雨勝法雨。
我今摧伏，一切怨結，竪立第一，微妙法幢；
度諸眾生，於生死海，永斷三惡，無量苦惱。
煩惱熾然，燒諸眾生，無有救護，無所依止；
我以甘露，清涼美味，充足是輩，令離焦熱，
於無量劫，遵修諸行，供養恭敬，諸佛世尊；
堅固修習，菩提之道；求於如來，真實法身；
捨諸所重，肢節手足、頭目髓腦、所愛妻子、
錢財珍寶、真珠瓔珞、金銀琉璃，種種異物。」

金光明經卷第二

四天王品第六

爾時，毘沙門天王、提頭賴吒天王、毘留勒叉天王、毘留博叉天王，俱從座起，偏袒右肩，右膝著地，胡跪合掌，白佛言：「世尊！是金光明微妙經典眾經之王，諸佛世尊之所護念，莊嚴菩薩深妙功德，常為諸天之所恭敬，能令天王心生歡喜，亦為護世之所讚歎。此經能照諸天宮殿，是經能與眾生快樂，是經能令地獄．餓鬼．畜生諸河焦乾枯竭，是經能除一切怖畏，是經能卻他方怨賊，是經能除穀貴饑饉，是經能愈一切疫病，是經能滅惡星變異，是經能除一切憂惱。舉要言之，是經能滅一切眾生無量無邊百千苦惱。

「世尊！是金光明微妙經典，若在大眾廣宣說時，我等四王及餘眷屬，聞此甘露無上法味，增益身力，心進勇銳，具諸威德。

「世尊！我等四王，能說正法、修行正法，為世法王以法治世。

「世尊！我等四王及天、龍、鬼神、乾闥婆、阿脩羅、迦樓羅、緊那羅、摩睺羅伽，以法治世，遮諸惡鬼噉精氣者。

「世尊！我等四王二十八部諸鬼神等，及無量百千鬼神，以淨天眼過於人眼，常觀擁護此閻浮提。世尊！是故我等名護世王。若此國土有諸衰耗、怨賊侵境、饑饉疾疫種種艱難，若有比丘受持是經，我等四王當共勸請，令是比丘以我力故，疾往彼所國邑郡縣，廣宣流布是金光明微妙經典，令如是等種種百千衰耗之事悉皆滅盡。

「世尊！如諸國王所有土境，是持經者若至其國，是王應當往是人所，聽受如是微妙經典。聞已歡喜，復當護念恭敬是人。世尊！我等四王，復當勤心擁護是王及國人民，為除衰患令得安隱。

「世尊！若有比丘、比丘尼、優婆塞、優婆夷受持是經，若諸人王有能供給施其所安，我等四王亦當令是王及國人民一切安隱具足無患。世尊！若有四眾受持讀誦是妙經典，若諸人王有能供養恭敬、尊重讚歎，我等四王亦復當令如是人王，於諸王中常得第一供養恭敬、尊重讚歎，亦令餘王欽尚、羨慕、稱讚其善。」

爾時，世尊讚歎護世四天王等：「善哉，善哉！汝等四王，過去已曾供養恭敬、尊重讚歎無量百千萬億諸佛，於諸佛所種諸善根，說於正法修行正法，以法治世為人天王。汝等今日長夜利益於諸眾生，行大悲心，施與眾生一切樂具，能遮諸惡，勤與諸善。以是義故，若有人王能供養恭敬此金光明微妙經典，汝等正應如是護念，滅其苦惱，與其安樂。

「汝等四王及諸眷屬、無量無邊百千鬼神，若能護念如是經者，即

是護持去來現在諸佛正法。汝等四王及餘天眾百千鬼神，與阿脩羅共戰鬪時，汝等諸天常得勝利。汝等若能護念此經，悉能消伏一切諸苦，所謂怨賊饑饉疾疫。若四部眾有能受持讀誦此經，汝等亦應勤心守護，為除衰惱，施與安樂。」

爾時，四王復白佛言：「世尊！是金光明微妙經典，於未來世在所流布，若國土城邑、郡縣、村落隨所至處，若諸國王以天律治世，復能恭敬至心聽受是妙經典，並復尊重供養供給持是經典四部之眾，以是因緣，我等時時得聞如是微妙經典，聞已即得增益身力，心進勇銳，具諸威德。是故我等及無量鬼神，常當隱形隨其妙典所流布處，而作擁護令無留難；亦當護念聽是經典諸國王等及其人民，除其患難悉令安隱，他方怨賊亦使退散。若有人王聽是經時，隣國怨敵興如是念：『當具四兵壞彼國土。』世尊！以是經典威神力故，爾時隣敵更有異怨為作留難，於其境界起諸衰惱災異疫病。爾時怨敵起如是等諸惡事已，備具四兵發向是國規往討罰，我等爾時，當與眷屬無量無邊百千鬼神，隱蔽其形為作護助，令彼怨敵自然退散，起諸怖懅種種留難。彼國兵眾尚不能到，況復當能有所破壞？」

爾時，佛讚四天王等：「善哉，善哉！汝等四王，乃能擁護我百千億那由他劫所可修習阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，及諸人王受持是經恭敬供養者，為消衰患令其安樂；復能擁護宮殿、舍宅、城邑、村落、國土邊疆，乃至怨賊悉令退散，滅其衰惱令得安隱，亦令一切閻浮提內所有諸王無諸凶衰鬪訟之事。

「四王當知，此閻浮提八萬四千城邑聚落、八萬四千諸人王等，各於其國娛樂快樂，各各於國而得自在；於自所有錢財珍寶，各各自足不相侵奪；如其宿世所修集業隨業受報，不生惡心貪求他國；各各自生利益之心，生於慈心、安樂之心、不諍訟心、不破壞心、無繫縛心、無楚撻心，各於其土自生愛樂，上下和睦猶如水乳，心相愛念增諸善根。以是因緣故，此閻浮提安隱豐樂，人民熾盛大地沃壤，陰陽調和時不越序，日月星宿不失常度，風雨隨時無諸災橫，人民豐實自足於財，心無貪吝亦無嫉妒，等行十善，其人壽終多生天上，天宮充滿增益天眾。

「若未來世有諸人王聽是經典，及供養恭敬，受持是經四部之眾，是王則為安樂利益汝等四王及餘眷屬無量百千諸鬼神等。何以故？汝等四王，若得時時聞是經典，則為已得正法之水，服甘露味增益身力，心進勇銳，具諸威德。是諸人王，若能至心聽受是經，則為已能供養於我。若供養我，則是供養過去未來現在諸佛；若能供養過去未來現在諸佛，則得無量不可思議功德之聚。以是因緣，是諸人王應得擁護，及後妃、婇女、中宮眷屬、諸王子等亦應得護，衰

惱消滅，快樂熾盛，宮殿堂宇安隱清淨無諸災變，護宅之神增長威德，亦受無量歡悅快樂。是諸國土所有人民，悉受種種五欲之樂，一切惡事悉皆消滅。」

爾時，四天王白佛言：「世尊！未來之世若有人王，欲得護身及後妃婇女諸王子等宮殿屋宅，得第一護身，所王領最為殊勝，具不可思議王者功德；欲得攝取無量福聚，國土無有他方怨賊，無諸憂惱及諸苦事；世尊！如是人王不應放逸散亂其心，應生恭敬謙下之心，應當莊嚴第一微妙最勝宮宅，種種香汁持用灑地，散種種華敷大法座師子之座，兼以無量珍琦異物而為校飾，張施種種無數微妙幢幡寶蓋；當淨洗浴以香塗身，著好淨衣纓絡自嚴，坐卑小座不自高大；除去自在離諸放逸，謙下自卑除去驕慢，正念聽受如是妙典，於說法者生世尊想；復於宮內後妃王子婇女眷屬，生慈哀心和顏與語，勸以種種供養之具供養法師。是王爾時既勸化已，即生無量歡喜快樂，心懷悅豫倍復自勵，不生疲倦多作利益，於說法者倍生恭敬。」

爾時，佛告四天大王：「爾時人王，應著白淨鮮潔之衣，種種纓絡齊整莊嚴，執持素白微妙上蓋，服飾容儀不失常則，躬出奉迎說法之人。何以故？是王如是隨其舉足步步之中，即是供養值遇百千億那由他諸佛世尊；復得超越如是等劫生死之難；復於來世爾所劫中，常得封受轉輪王位；隨其步步亦得如是現世功德不可思議自在之力；常得最勝極妙七寶人天宮殿；在在生處增益壽命；言語辯了人所信用；無所畏忌有大名稱；常為人天之所恭敬，天上人中受上妙樂；得大勢力具足威德；身色微妙端嚴第一；常值諸佛遇善知識；成就具足無量福聚。

「汝等四天王！如是人王，見如是等種種無量功德利益，是故此王應當躬出奉迎法師；若一由旬至百千由旬，於說法師應生佛想，應作是念：『今日釋迦如來正智，入於我宮受我供養，為我說法，我聞是法，即不退轉於阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，已為得值百千萬億那由他佛，已為供養過去未來現在諸佛，已得畢竟三惡道苦。我今已種百千無量轉輪聖王釋梵之因，已種無邊善根種子，已令無量百千萬億諸眾生等度於生死，已集無量無邊福聚，後宮眷屬已得擁護，宮宅諸衰悉已消滅，國土無有怨賊棘刺，他方怨敵不能侵陵。』

「汝等四王！如是人王，應作如是供養正法，清淨聽受是妙經典，及恭敬供養、尊重讚歎持是經典四部之眾；亦當迴此所得最勝功德之分，施與汝等及餘眷屬諸天鬼神。聚集如是諸善功德，現世常得無量無邊不可思議自在之利，威德勢力成就具足，能以正法摧伏諸惡。」

爾時，四王白佛言：「世尊！若未來世有諸人王，作如是等恭敬正法，

至心聽受是妙經典，及恭敬供養、尊重讚歎持是經典四部之眾，嚴治舍宅、香汁灑地，專心正念聽說法時，我等四王亦當在中共聽此法；願諸人王為自利故，以己所得功德少分施與我等。

「世尊！是諸人王於說法者所坐之處，為我等故燒種種香供養是經，是妙香氣，於一念頃即至我等諸天宮殿；其香即時變成香蓋，其香微妙金色晃耀照我等宮釋宮梵宮。大辯天神、功德天神、堅牢地神、散脂鬼神最大將軍、二十八部鬼神大將、摩醯首羅、金剛密跡、摩尼跋陀鬼神大將、鬼子母，與五百兒子周匝圍繞，阿耨達龍王、娑竭羅龍王，如是等眾，自於宮殿各各得聞是妙香氣，及見香蓋光明普照；是香蓋光明亦照一切諸天宮殿。」

佛告四王：「是香蓋光明非但至汝四王宮殿。何以故？是諸人王手擎香爐，供養經時，其香遍佈，於一念頃遍至三千大千世界，百億日月、百億大海、百億須彌山、百億大鐵圍山小鐵圍山及諸山王、百百億四天下、百億四天王、百億三十三天，乃至百億非想非非想天。於此三千大千世界百億三十三天，一切龍、鬼、乾闥婆、阿脩羅、迦樓羅、緊那羅、摩睺羅伽宮殿虛空悉滿種種香煙雲蓋，其蓋金光亦照宮殿。如是三千大千世界，所有種種香煙雲蓋，皆是此經威神力故。

「是諸人王手擎香爐供養經時，種種香氣不但遍此三千大千世界，於一念頃亦遍十方無量無邊恒河沙等百千萬億諸佛世界，於諸佛上虛空之中，亦成香蓋，金光普照，亦復如是。諸佛世尊聞是妙香，見是香蓋及金色光，於十方界恒河沙等諸佛世界，作如是等神力變化已，異口同音於說法者稱讚：『善哉，善哉！大士！汝能廣宣流布如是甚深微妙經典，則為成就無量無邊不可思議功德之聚。若有聞是甚深經典，所得功德則為不少，況持讀誦為他眾生開示分別演說其義。何以故？善男子！此金光明微妙經典，無量無邊億那由他諸菩薩等若得聞者，即不退於阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。』

「爾時十方無量無邊恒河沙等諸佛世界現在諸佛，異口同聲作如是言：『善男子！汝於來世必定當得坐於道場菩提樹下，於三界中最尊最勝，出過一切眾生之上；勤修力故受諸苦行，善能莊嚴菩提道場，能壞三千大千世界外道邪論，摧伏諸魔怨賊異形，覺了諸法第一寂滅、清淨無垢、甚深無上菩提之道。

「『善男子！汝已能坐金剛座處，轉於無上諸佛所讚十二種行甚深法輪，能擊無上最大法鼓，能吹無上極妙法螺，能竪無上最勝法幢，能然無上極明法炬，能雨無上甘露法雨，能斷無量煩惱怨結，能令無量百千萬億那由他眾，度於無涯可畏大海，解脫生死無際輪轉，值遇無量百千萬億那由他佛。』」

爾時，四天王復白佛言：「世尊！是金光明微妙經典，能得未來現在種種無量功德。是故人王，若得聞是微妙經典，則為已於百千萬億無量佛所種諸善根。我以敬念是人王故，復見無量福德利故，我等四王及餘眷屬無量百千萬億鬼神，於自宮殿見是種種香煙雲蓋瑞應之時，我當隱蔽不現其身，為聽法故，當至是王所至宮殿講法之處。大梵天王、釋提桓因、大辯天神、功德天神、堅牢地神、散脂鬼神大將軍等，二十八部鬼神大將、摩醯首羅、金剛密跡、摩尼跋陀鬼神大將、鬼子母及五百兒子周匝圍繞，阿耨達龍王、娑竭羅龍王，無量百千萬億那由他鬼神諸天，如是等眾為聽法故，悉自隱蔽不現其身，至是人王所止宮殿講法之處。

「世尊！我等四王及餘眷屬無量鬼神，悉當同心以是人王為善知識，同共一行善相應行。能為無上大法施主，以甘露味充足我等；我等應當擁護是王，除其衰患令得安隱，及其宮宅國土城邑，諸惡災患悉令消滅。

「世尊！若有人王，於此經典心生捨離不樂聽聞，其心不欲恭敬供養、尊重讚歎；若四部眾有受持讀誦講說之者，亦復不能恭敬供養、尊重讚歎；我等四王及餘眷屬無量鬼神，即便不得聞此正法，背甘露味失大法利，無有勢力及以威德，減損天眾，增長惡趣。世尊！我等四王及無量鬼神捨其國土，不但我等，亦有無量守護國土諸舊善神皆悉捨去。我等諸王及諸鬼神既捨離已，其國當有種種災異，一切人民失其善心，唯有繫縛瞋恚鬪諍，互相破壞；多諸疾疫，彗星現怪流星崩落，五星諸宿違失常度，兩日並現日月薄蝕，白黑惡虹數數出現，大地震動發大音聲，暴風惡雨無日不有，穀米勇貴饑饉凍餓，多有他方怨賊侵掠其國，人民多受苦惱，其地無有可愛樂處。世尊！我等四王及諸無量百千鬼神，並守國土諸舊善神，遠離去時生如是等無量惡事。

「世尊！若有人王，欲得自護及王國土多受安樂，欲令國土一切眾生悉皆成就具足快樂，欲得摧伏一切外敵，欲得擁護一切國土，欲以正法正治國土，欲得除滅眾生怖畏。世尊！是人王等應當必定聽是經典，及恭敬供養讀誦受持是經典者。我等四王及無量鬼神，以是法食善根因緣，得服甘露無上法味，增長身力，心進勇銳，增益諸天。何以故？以是人王至心聽受是經典故，如諸梵天說出欲論、釋提桓因種種善論、五通之人神仙之論。

「世尊！梵天釋提桓因五神通人，雖有百千億那由他無量勝論，是金光明於中最勝。所以者何？如來說是《金光明經》，為眾生故；為令一切閻浮提內諸人王等以正法治；為與一切眾生安樂；為欲愛護一切眾生；欲令眾生無諸苦惱，無有他方怨賊棘刺，所有諸惡背而

不向；欲令國土無有憂惱，以正法教無有諍訟；是故人王各於國土，應然法炬熾然，正法增益天眾。我等四王及無量鬼神、閻浮提內諸天善神，以是因緣，得服甘露法味充足，得大威德、進力具足，閻浮提內安隱豐樂，人民熾盛，安樂其處。復於來世無量百千不可思議那由他劫，常受微妙第一快樂，復得值遇無量諸佛種諸善根，然後證成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。得如是等無量功德，悉是如來正遍知說，如來過於百千億那由他諸梵天等，以大悲力故；亦過無量百千億那由他釋提桓因，以苦行力故。是故如來為諸眾生演說如是《金光明經》。若閻浮提一切眾生及諸人王，世間出世間所作國事，所造世論，皆因此經，欲令眾生得安樂故，釋迦如來示現是經廣宣流布。世尊！以是因緣故，是諸人王應當必定聽受、供養恭敬、尊重讚歎是經。」

爾時，佛復告四天王：「汝等四王及餘眷屬無量百千那由他鬼神！是諸人王，若能至心聽是經典，供養恭敬、尊重讚歎，汝等四王，正應擁護，滅其衰患而與安樂。若有人能廣宣流布如是妙典，於人天中大作佛事，能大利益無量眾生，如是之人，汝等四王必當擁護，莫令他緣而得擾亂，令心恬靜，受於快樂，續復當得廣宣是經。」

爾時，四天王即從座起，偏袒右肩，右膝著地，長跪合掌，於世尊前以偈讚曰：

「佛月清淨，滿足莊嚴；佛日暉曜，放千光明。
如來面目，最上明淨，齒白無垢，如蓮華根；
功德無量，猶如大海；智淵無邊，法水具足，
百千三昧，無有缺減；足下平滿，千輻相現；
足指網縵，猶如鵝王；光明晃耀，如寶山王；
微妙清淨，如鍊真金。所有福德，不可思議，
佛功德山，我今敬禮。佛真法身，猶如虛空，
應物現形，如水中月，無有障礙，如焰如化。
是故我今，稽首佛月。」

爾時世尊，以偈答曰：

「此金光明，諸經之王，甚深最勝，為無有上，
十力世尊，之所宣說，汝等四王，應當勤護。
以是因緣，是深妙典，能與眾生，無量快樂，
為諸眾生，安樂利益，故久流布，於閻浮提；
能滅三千，大千世界，所有惡趣，無量諸苦。
閻浮提內，諸人王等，心生慈潛，正法治世，
若能流布，此妙經典，則令其土，安隱豐熟，
所有眾生，悉受快樂。若有人王，欲愛己身，

及其國土，欲令豐盛，應當至心，淨潔洗浴，
往法會所，聽受是經。是經能作，所有善事，
摧伏一切，內外怨賊；復能除滅，無量怖畏；
是諸經王，能與一切，無量眾生，安隱快樂。
譬如寶樹，在人家中，悉能出生，一切珍寶；
是妙經典，亦復如是，悉能出生，諸王功德。
如清冷水，能除渴乏；是妙經典，亦復如是，
能除諸王，功德渴乏。譬如珍寶、異物篋器，
悉在於手，隨意所用；是金光明，亦復如是，
隨意能與，諸王法寶。是金光明，微妙經典，
常為諸天，恭敬供養；亦為護世，四大天王，
威神勢力，之所護持；十方諸佛，常念是經，
若有演說，稱讚善哉。亦有百千，無量鬼神，
從十方來，擁護是人。若有得聞，是妙經典，
心生歡喜，踴躍無量；閻浮提內，無量大眾，
皆悉歡喜，集聽是經；聽是經故，具諸威德，
增益天眾，精氣身力。」

爾時，四天王聞是偈已，白佛言：「世尊！我從昔來未曾得聞如是微妙寂滅之法，我聞是已心生悲喜、涕淚交流、舉身戰動、肢節怡解，復得無量不可思議具足妙樂。」以天曼陀羅華、摩訶曼陀羅華，供養奉散於如來上。作如是等供養佛已，復白佛言：「世尊！我等四王，各各自有五百鬼神，常當隨逐是說法者而為守護。」

大辯天神品第七

爾時，大辯天白佛言：「世尊！是說法者，我當益其樂說辯才，令其所說莊嚴次第，善得大智。若是經中有失文字、句義違錯，我能令是說法比丘次第還得，能與總持，令不忘失。若有眾生於百千佛所種諸善根，是說法者為是等故，於閻浮提廣宣流布是妙經典，令不斷絕。復令無量無邊眾生得聞是經，當令是等悉得猛利不可思議大智慧聚、不可稱量福德之報；善解無量種種方便、善能辯暢一切諸論、善知世間種種技術，能出生死，得不退轉，必定疾得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。」

功德天品第八

爾時，功德天白佛言：「世尊！是說法者，我當隨其所須之物，衣服、飲食、臥具、醫藥及餘資產，供給是人，無所乏少，令心安住，晝夜歡樂、正念思惟是經章句分別深義。若有眾生於百千佛所種諸善

根，是說法者為是等故，於閻浮提廣宣流布是妙經典，令不斷絕。是諸眾生聽是經已，於未來世無量百千那由他劫，常在天上人中受樂，值遇諸佛，速成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，三惡道苦悉畢無餘。

「世尊！我已於過去寶華功德海琉璃金山照明如來、應供、正遍知、明行足、善逝、世間解、無上士、調御丈夫、天人師、佛、世尊所種諸善根。是故我今隨所念方、隨所視方、隨所至方，能令無量百千眾生受諸快樂，若衣服、飲食、資生之具、金銀七寶、真珠、琉璃、珊瑚、琥珀、壁玉、珂貝，悉無所乏。若有人能稱金光明微妙經典，為我供養諸佛世尊，三稱我名燒香供養；供養佛已，別以香、華、種種美味，供施於我，灑散諸方；當知是人即能聚集資財寶物。以是因緣增長地味，地神諸天悉皆歡喜，所種穀米、芽莖枝葉果實滋茂，樹神歡喜出生無量種種諸物。我時慈念諸眾生故，多與資生所須之物。

「世尊！於此北方毘沙門天王，有城名曰阿尼曼陀，其城有園名功德華光，於是園中有最勝園，名曰金幢，七寶極妙，此即是我常止住處。若有欲得財寶增長，是人當於自所住處應淨掃灑，洗浴其身，著鮮白衣，妙香塗身，為我至心三稱彼佛寶華琉璃世尊名號，禮拜、供養、燒香、散華；亦當三稱金光明經，至誠發願，別以香華、種種美味供施於我，散灑諸方。爾時，當說如是章句：

「波利富樓那遮利　三曼陀達舍尼羅佉　摩訶毘呵羅伽帝　三曼陀毘陀那伽帝　摩訶迦梨波帝　波婆禰　薩婆哆詁　三曼陀　脩缽梨富隸　阿夜那達摩帝　摩訶毘鼓畢帝　摩訶彌勒簸僧祇帝　醯帝篌三博祇悕帝　三曼陀阿咃　阿耨婆羅尼

「是灌頂章句必定吉祥，真實不虛，等行眾生及中善根應當受持、讀誦、通利，七日七夜受持八戒，朝暮淨心，香華供養十方諸佛，常為己身及諸眾生，迴向具足阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，作是誓願：『令我所求皆得吉祥。』自於所居房舍屋宅淨潔掃除。若自住處、若阿蘭若處，以香泥塗地、燒微妙香、敷淨好座，以種種華香布散其地以待於我。我於爾時，如一念頃入其室宅，即坐其座，從此日夜令此所居，若村邑、若僧坊、若露地，無所乏少；若錢、若金銀、若珍寶、若牛羊、若穀米，一切所須即得具足，悉受快樂。若能以己所作善根最勝之分迴與我者，我當終身不遠其人，於所住處至心護念，隨其所求令得成就。

「應當至心禮如是等諸佛世尊，其名曰：寶勝如來、無垢熾寶光明王相如來、金焰光明如來、金百光明照藏如來、金山寶蓋如來、金華焰光相如來、大炬如來、寶相如來；亦應敬禮信相菩薩、金光明菩薩、金藏菩薩、常悲菩薩、法上菩薩；亦應敬禮東方阿閦如來、

南方寶相如來、西方無量壽佛、北方微妙聲佛。」

堅牢地神品第九

爾時，地神堅牢白佛言：「世尊！是金光明微妙經典，若現在世、若未來世，在在處處——若城邑聚落、若山澤空處、若王宮宅，世尊！隨是經典所流布處，是地分中敷師子座，令說法者坐其座上，廣演宣說是妙經典；我當在中常作宿衛，隱蔽其身於法座下頂戴其足。我聞法已，得服甘露無上法味，增益身力，而此大地深十六萬八千由旬，從金剛際至海地上，悉得眾味增長具足，豐壤肥濃過於今日。以是之故，閻浮提內藥草、樹木、根莖、枝葉、華果滋茂，美色香味皆悉具足。眾生食已，增長壽命、色力辯安，六情諸根具足通利，威德顏貌端嚴殊特。成就如是種種等已，所作事業多得成辦，有大勢力，精勤勇猛。

「是故，世尊！閻浮提內安隱豐樂，人民熾盛；一切眾生多受快樂，應心適意隨其所樂。是諸眾生得是威德大勢力已，能供養是《金光明經》，及恭敬供養持是經者四部之眾，我於爾時當往其所，為諸眾生受快樂故，請說法者廣令宣佈如是妙典。何以故？世尊！是金光明若廣說時，我及眷屬所得功德倍過於常，增長身力，心進勇銳。

「世尊！我服甘露無上味已，閻浮提地縱廣七千由旬，豐壤倍常。世尊！如是大地，眾生所依，悉能增長一切所須之物；增長一切所須物已，令諸眾生隨意所用，受於快樂。種種飲食、衣服、臥具、宮殿、屋宅、樹木、林苑、河池、井泉，如是等物依因於地悉皆具足。是故，世尊！是諸眾生為知我恩，應作是念：『我當必定聽受是經，供養恭敬、尊重讚歎。』作是念已，即從住處，若城邑聚落、舍宅空地，往法會所聽受是經。既聽受已，還其所止，各應相慶作如是言：『我等今者聞此甚深無上妙法，已為攝取不可思議功德之聚，值遇無量無邊諸佛，三惡道報已得解脫，於未來世常生天上人中受樂。』是諸眾生各於住處，若為他人演說是經，若說一喻、一品、一緣，若復稱歎一佛、一菩薩、一四句偈，乃至一句，及稱是經首題名字，世尊！隨是眾生所住之處，其地具足，豐壤肥濃過於餘地；凡是因地所生之物，悉得增長，滋茂廣大，令諸眾生受於快樂，多饒財寶，好行惠施，心常堅固深信三寶。」

爾時，佛告地神堅牢：「若有眾生，乃至聞是《金光明經》一句之義，人中命終隨意往生三十三天。地神！若有眾生為欲供養是經典故，莊嚴屋宅，乃至張懸一幡、一蓋，及以一衣，欲界六天已有自然七寶宮殿，是人命終即往生彼。地神！於諸七寶宮殿之中，各各自然有七天女共相娛樂，日夜常受不可思議微妙快樂。」

爾時，地神白佛言：「世尊！以是因緣，說法比丘坐法座時，我常晝夜衛護不離，隱蔽其形在法座下頂戴其足。世尊！若有眾生於百千佛所種諸善根，是說法者為是等故，於閻浮提廣宣流布是妙經典，令不斷絕。是諸眾生聽是經已，未來之世無量百千那由他劫，於天上人中常受快樂，值遇諸佛，疾成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，三惡道苦悉斷無餘。」

金光明經卷第三

散脂鬼神品第十

爾時，散脂鬼神大將，及二十八部諸鬼神等，即從座起，偏袒右肩右膝著地，白佛言：「世尊！是金光明微妙經典，若現在世及未來世，在在處處，若城邑聚落、若山澤空處、若王宮宅，隨是經典所流布處，我當與此二十八部大鬼神等，往至彼所，隱蔽其形，隨逐擁護是說法者，消滅諸惡令得安隱；及聽法眾，若男若女、童男童女，於是經中乃至得聞一如來名、一菩薩名，及此經典首題名字，受持讀誦，我當隨侍宿衛擁護，悉滅其惡，令得安隱；及國邑、城郭，若王宮殿、舍宅空處，皆亦如是。世尊！何因緣故我名散脂鬼神大將？唯然世尊，自當證知。

「世尊！我知一切法、一切緣法，了一切法，知法分齊，如法安住一切法如性，於一切法含受一切法。世尊！我現見不可思議智光、不可思議智炬、不可思議智行、不可思議智聚、不可思議智境。世尊！我於諸法正解、正觀，得正分別，正解於緣，正能覺了。世尊！以是義故名散脂大將。

「世尊！我散脂大將，令說法者莊嚴言辭，辯不斷絕；眾味精氣從毛孔入，充益身力，心進勇銳，成就不可思議智慧，入正憶念。如是等事悉令具足，心無疲厭，身受諸樂，心得歡喜。以是意故，能為眾生廣說是經。

「若有眾生於百千佛所種諸善根，說法之人，為是眾生於閻浮提內廣宣流布是妙經典，令不斷絕。無量眾生聞是經已，當得不可思議智聚，攝取不可思議功德之聚，於未來世無量百千劫，人天之中常受快樂；於未來世值遇諸佛，疾得證成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，一切眾苦三惡趣分永滅無餘。

「南無寶華功德海琉璃金山光照如來、應供、正遍知。南無無量百千億那由他莊嚴其身釋迦如來、應供、正遍知，熾然如是微妙法炬。南無第一威德成就眾事大功德天。南無不可思量智慧功德成就大辯

天。」

正論品第十一

爾時，佛告地神堅牢：「過去有王名力尊相，其王有子名曰信相，不久當受灌頂之位統領國土。爾時，父王告其大子信相：『世有正論，善治國土。我於昔時曾為大子，不久亦當紹父王位。爾時父王持是正論，亦為我說，我以是論於二萬歲善治國土，未曾一念以非法行，於自眷屬情無愛著。』何等名為治世正論？

「地神！爾時力尊相王為信相大子，說是偈言：

「『我今當說，諸王正論，為利眾生，斷諸疑惑。
一切人王、諸天天王，應當歡喜，合掌諦聽。
諸王和合，集金剛山，護世四鎮，起問梵王：
「大師梵尊，天中自在，能除疑惑，當為我斷。
云何是人，得名為天？云何人王，復名天子？
生在人中，處王宮殿，正法治世，而名為天？」

護世四王，問是事已，時梵尊師，即說偈言：

「汝今雖以，此義問我，我要當為，一切眾生，
敷揚宣暢，第一勝論。因集業故，生於人中，
王領國土，故稱人王。處在胎中，諸天守護，
或先守護，然後入胎；雖在人中，生為人王，
以天護故，復稱天子。三十三天，各以己德，
分與是人，故稱天子。神力所加，故得自在；
遠離惡法，遮令不起；安住善法，修令增廣，
能令眾生，多生天上。半名人王，亦名執樂，
羅剎魁膾，能遮諸惡；亦名父母，教誨修善，
示現果報，諸天所護；善惡諸業，現在未來，
現受果報，諸天所護；若有惡事，縱而不問，
不治其罪，不以正教，捨遠善法，增長惡趣，
故使國中，多諸姦鬪；三十三天，各生瞋恨，
由其國王，縱惡不治。壞國正法，姦詐熾盛，
他方怨敵，競來侵掠；自家所有，錢財珍寶，
諸惡盜賊，共來劫奪。如法治世，不行是事；
若行是者，其國殄滅。譬如狂象，踏蓮花池，
暴風卒起，屢降惡雨，惡星數出，日月無光，
五穀果實，鹹不滋茂。由王捨正，使國饑饉；
天於宮殿，悉懷愁惱，由王暴虐，不修善事。」

是諸天王，各相謂言：

「是王行惡，與惡為伴。以造惡故，速得天瞋；
以天瞋故，不久國敗，非法兵仗、姦詐鬪訟、
疾疫惡病，集其國土。」

諸天即便，捨離是王，令其國敗，生大愁惱。
兄弟姊妹、眷屬妻子，孤迸流離，身亦滅亡；
流星數墮、二日並現；他方惡賊，侵掠其土；
人民飢餓，多諸疾疫；所重大臣，捨離薨亡；
象馬車乘，一念喪滅；諸家財產，國土所有，
互相劫奪，刀兵而死；五星諸宿，違失常度；
諸惡疾疫，流遍其國；諸受寵祿，所任大臣，
及諸群僚，專行非法；如是行惡，偏受恩遇，
修善法者，日日衰滅；於行惡者，而生恭敬，
見修善者，心不顧錄，故使世間，三異並起，
星宿失度，降暴風雨，破壞甘露　無上正法、
眾生等類，及以地肥；恭敬弊惡，毀諸善人，
故天降雹、飢餓疫病；穀米果實，滋味衰減；
多病眾生，充滿其國；甘美盛果，日日損減；
苦澁惡味，隨時增長；本所遊戲，可愛之處，
悉皆枯悴，無可樂者。眾生所食，精妙上味，
漸漸損減，食無肥膚，顏貌醜陋，氣力衰微；
凡所食噉，不知厭足；力精勇猛；悉滅無有；
嬾惰懈怠，充滿其國；多有病苦，逼切其身；
惡星變動，羅剎亂行。若有人王，行於非法，
增長惡伴，損人天道，於三有中，多受苦惱；
起如是等，無量惡事，皆由人王，愛著眷屬，
縱之造惡，捨而不治。若為諸天，所護生者，
如是人王，終不為是。有行善者，得生天中；
行不善者，墮在三塗；三十三天，皆生焦熱。
由王縱惡，捨而不治，違逆諸天，及父母勅，
不能正治，則非孝子。起諸姦惡，壞國土者，
不應縱捨，當正治罪。是故諸天，護持是王，
以滅惡法。修習善故，現世正治，得增王位；
應各為說，善不善業。能示因果，故得為王。
諸天護持，隣王佐助，為自為他，修正治國；
有壞國者，應當正教，為命及國，修行正法，
不應行惡；惡不應縱，所有餘事，不能壞國。
要因多姦，然後傾敗；若起多姦，壞於國土，

譬如大象，壞蓮華池。怨恨諸天，故天生惱，
起諸惡事，彌滿其國。是故應隨，正法治世，
以善化國，不順非法，寧捨身命。不愛眷屬，
於親非親，心常平等，視親非親，和合為一；
正行名稱，流布三界。正法治國，人多行善，
常以善心，仰瞻國王，能令天眾，具足充滿；
是故正治，名為人王。一切諸天，愛護人王，
猶如父母，擁護其子；故令日月，五星諸宿，
隨其分齊，不失常度；風雨隨時，無諸災禍，
令國豐實，安樂熾盛，增益人民，諸天之眾。
以是因緣，諸人王等，寧捨身命，不應為惡，
不應捨離，正法珍寶。由正法寶，世人受樂，
常當親近，修正法者，聚集功德，莊嚴其身。
於自眷屬，常知止足；當遠惡人，修治正法；
安止眾生，於諸善法，教勅防護，令離不善。
是故國土，安隱豐樂，是王亦得，威德具足。
隨諸人民，所行惡法，應當調伏，如法教詔，
是王當得，好名善譽，善能攝護，安樂眾生。』

善集品第十二

爾時，如來復為地神說往昔因緣，而作偈言：

「我昔曾為，轉輪聖王，捨四大地，及以大海。
又於是時，以四天下，滿中珍寶，奉上諸佛。
凡所佈施，皆捨所重，不見可愛，而不捨者。
於過去世，無數劫中，求正法故，常捨身命。
又過去世，不可議劫，有佛世尊，名曰寶勝。
其佛世尊，般涅槃後，時有聖王，名曰善集，
於四天下，而得自在，治正之勢，盡大海際。
其王有城，名水音尊，於其城中，止住治化。
夜睡夢中，聞佛功德，及見比丘，名曰寶冥，
善能宣暢，如來正法，所謂金光，微妙經典，
明如日中，悉能遍照。是轉輪王，夢是事已，
即尋覺寤，心喜遍身，即出宮殿，至僧坊所，
供養恭敬，諸大聖眾，問諸大德：
『是大眾中，頗有比丘，名曰寶冥，成就一切，
諸功德不？』

爾時寶冥，在一窟中，安坐不動，思惟正念，

讀誦如是，金光明經。時有比丘，即將是王，
至其所止，到寶冥所。時此寶冥，故在窟中，
形貌殊特，威德熾然。即示王言：
『是窟中者，即是所問，寶冥比丘。能持甚深，
諸佛所行，名金光明，諸經之王。』

時善集王，即尋禮敬，寶冥比丘，作如是言：
『面如滿月，威德熾然，惟願為我，敷演宣說，
是金光明，諸經之王。』

時寶冥尊，即受王請，許為宣說，是金光明。
三千大千，世界諸天，知當說法，悉生歡喜，
於淨微妙，鮮絜之處，種種珍寶，廁填其地；
上妙香水，持用灑之；散諸好華，遍滿其處。
王於是時，自敷法座，懸繒幡蓋，寶飾交絡，
種種微妙，殊特末香，悉以奉散，大法高座。
一切諸天、龍及鬼神、摩睺羅伽、緊那羅等，
即雨天上，曼陀羅華，遍散法座，滿其處所。
不可思議，百千萬億，那由他等，無量諸天，
一時俱來，集說法所。是時寶冥，尋從窟出，
諸天即時，以娑羅華，供養奉散，寶冥比丘。
是時寶冥，淨洗身體，著淨妙衣，至法座所，
合掌敬禮，是法高座。一切天王，及諸天人，
雨曼陀羅、大曼陀羅、摩訶曼殊、眾妙寶華；
無量百千，種種伎樂，於虛空中，不鼓自鳴。
寶冥比丘，能說法者，尋上高座，結跏趺坐。
即念十方，不可思議，無量千億，諸佛世尊，
於諸眾生，興大悲心；及善集王，所得王領，
盡一日月，所照之處。時說法者，即尋為王，
敷揚宣說，是妙經典。是時大王，為聞法故，
於比丘前，合掌而立，聞於正法，讚言善哉，
其心悲悼，涕淚交流；尋復踴悅，心意熙怡。
為欲供養，此經典故，爾時即提，如意珠王，
為諸眾生，發大誓願：

『願於今日，此閻浮提，悉雨無量，種種珍異，
瑰琦七寶，及妙瓔珞。以是因緣，悉令無量，
一切眾生，皆受快樂。』

即於爾時，尋雨七寶，及諸寶飾，天冠耳璫、
種種瓔珞、甘饌寶座，悉皆充滿，遍四天下。

時王善集，即持如是，滿四天下，無量七寶，
於寶勝佛，遺法之中，以用佈施，供養三寶。
爾時為王，說法比丘，於今現在，阿閦佛是；
時善集王，聽受法者，今則我身，釋迦文是。
我於爾時，捨此大地，滿四天下，珍寶佈施，
得聞如是，金光明經。聞是經已，一稱善哉，
以此善根、業因緣故，身得金色，百福莊嚴，
常為無量，百千萬億，眾生等類，之所樂見；
既得見已，無有厭足。過去九十，九億千劫，
常得作於，轉輪聖王；亦於無量，百千劫中，
常得王領，諸小國土；不可思議，劫中常作，
釋提桓因，及淨梵王。復得值遇，十力世尊，
其數無量，不可稱計；所得功德，無量無邊，
皆由聞經，及稱善哉。如我所願，成就菩提，
正法之身，我今已得。」

鬼神品第十三

佛告功德天：「若有善男子、善女人，欲以不可思議妙供養具，供養過去、未來、現在諸佛世尊，及欲得知三世諸佛甚深行處，是人應當必定至心，隨有是經流布之處，若城邑村落、舍宅空處，正念不亂，至心聽是微妙經典。」

爾時，世尊欲重宣此義而說偈言：

「若欲供養，一切諸佛，欲知三世，諸佛行處，
應當往彼，城邑聚落，有是經處，至心聽受，
是妙經典。不可思議，功德大海，無量無邊；
能令一切，眾生解脫，度無量苦，諸有大海。
是經甚深，初中後善，不可得說，譬喻為比；
假使恒沙、大地微塵、大海諸水、一切諸山，
如是等物，不得為喻。若入是經，即入法性，
如深法性，安住其中，即於是典，金光明中，
而得見我，釋迦牟尼。不可思議，阿僧祇劫，
生天人中，常受快樂，以能信解，聽是經故。
如是無量，不可思議，功德福聚，悉已得之。
隨所至處，若百由旬，滿中盛火，應從中過；
若至聚落，阿蘭若處，到法會所，至心聽受；
聽是經故，惡夢蠱道、五星諸宿、變異災禍，
一切惡事，消滅無餘。於說法處，蓮華座上，

說是經典，書寫讀誦，是說法者，若下法座，
爾時大眾，猶見坐處；故有說者，或佛世尊，
或見佛像、菩薩色像、普賢菩薩、文殊師利、
彌勒大士，及諸形像；見如是等，種種事已，
尋復滅盡，如前無異。成就如是，諸功德已，
而為諸佛，之所讚歎；威德相貌，無量無邊；
有大名稱，能卻怨家；他方盜賊，能令退散；
勇捍多力，能破強敵；惡夢惱心，無量惡業，
如是惡事，皆悉寂滅。若入軍陣，常能勝他；
名聞流布，遍閻浮提；亦能摧伏，一切怨敵，
遠離諸惡，修習諸善；入陣得勝，心常歡喜。
大梵天王、三十三天、護世四王、金剛密跡、
鬼神諸王、散脂大將、禪那英鬼，及緊那羅、
阿耨達龍、娑竭羅王、阿脩羅王、迦樓羅王、
大辯天神、及功德天，如是上首，諸天神等，
常當供養；是聽法者，生不思議，法塔之想；
眾生見者，恭敬歡喜。
諸天王等，亦各思惟，而相謂言：
『令是眾生，無量威德，皆悉成就。』
若能來至，是法會所，如是之人，成上善根。
若有聽是，甚深經典，故嚴出往，法會之處，
心生不可，思議正信，供養恭敬，無上法塔；
如是大悲，利益眾生，即是無量，深法寶器，
能入甚深，無上法性。由以淨心，聽是經典，
如是之人，悉已供養，過去無量，百千諸佛；
以是善根，無量因緣，應當聽受，是金光明。
如是眾生，常為無量，諸天神王，之所愛護；
大辯功德、護世四王、無量鬼神，及諸力士，
晝夜精進，擁護四方，令無災禍，永離諸苦。
釋提桓因，及日月天、閻摩羅王、風水諸神、
違馱天神，及毘紐天、大辯天神，及自在天、
火神等神，大力勇猛，常護世間，晝夜不離。
大力鬼王、那羅延等、摩醯首羅、二十八部
諸鬼神等，散脂為首，百千鬼神，神足大力，
擁護是等，令不怖畏。金剛密跡　大鬼神王，
及其眷屬　五百徒黨，一切皆是，大菩薩等，
亦悉擁護，聽是經者。摩尼跋陀　大鬼神王、
富那跋陀，及金毘羅、阿羅婆帝、賓頭盧伽、
黃頭大神，一一諸神，各有五百，眷屬鬼神，

亦常擁護，聽是經者。質多斯那、阿脩羅王，
及乾闥婆、那羅羅閣、祁那娑婆、摩尼乾陀，
及尼揵陀、主雨大神、大飲食神、摩訶伽吒、
金色髮神、半祁鬼神，及半支羅、車鉢羅婆、
有大威德　婆那利神、曇摩跋羅、摩竭婆羅、
針髮鬼神、繡利蜜多、勒那翅奢、摩訶婆那，
及軍陀遮、劍摩舍帝；復有大神，奢羅蜜帝、
醯摩跋陀、薩多琦梨、多醯波醯、阿伽跋羅、
支羅摩伽、央掘摩羅，如是等神，皆有無量，
神足大力，常勤擁護，聽受如是　微妙經者。
阿耨達龍、娑伽羅王、目真隣王、伊羅鉢王、
難陀龍王、跋難陀王，有如是等，百千龍王，
以大神力，常來擁護，聽是經者，晝夜不離。
波利羅睺　阿脩羅王、毘摩質多，及以茂脂、
睒摩利子、波訶梨子、佉羅騫陀，及以揵陀，
是等皆是，阿脩羅王，有大神力，常來擁護，
聽是經者，晝夜不離。訶利帝南　鬼子母等，
及五百神，常來擁護，聽是經者，若睡若寤。
旃陀旃陀、利大鬼神女等、鳩羅鳩、羅檀提，
噉人精氣，如是等神，皆有大力，常勤擁護，
十方世界，受持經者。大辯天等　無量天女、
功德天等，各與眷屬，地神堅牢，種植園林
果實大神，如是諸神，心生歡喜，悉來擁護，
愛樂親近，是經典者。於諸眾生，增命色力，
功德威貌，莊嚴倍常；五星諸宿、變異災怪，
皆悉能滅，無有遺餘；夜臥惡夢，寤則憂悴，
如是惡事，皆悉滅盡。地神大力　勢分甚深，
是經力故，能變其味；如是大地　至金剛際，
厚十六萬，八千由旬，其中氣味，無不遍有，
悉令湧出，潤益眾生。是經力故，能令地味，
悉出地上，厚百由旬；亦令諸天，大得精氣，
充益身力，歡喜快樂。閻浮提內，所有諸神，
心生歡喜，受樂無量；是經力故，諸天歡喜，
百穀果實，皆悉滋茂；園苑叢林，其華開敷，
香氣馥酚，充溢彌滿；百草樹木，生長端直，
其體柔軟，無有斜戾。閻浮提內，所有龍女，
其數無量，不可思議，心生歡喜，踴躍無量，
在在處處，莊嚴華池，於其池中，生種種華：
優鉢羅華、波頭摩華、拘物頭華、分陀利華；

於自宮殿，除諸雲霧，令虛空中，無有塵翳，
諸方清徹，淨潔明瞭；日王赫焰，放千光明，
歡喜踴躍，照諸闇蔽。閻浮檀金，以為宮殿，
止住其中，威德無量。日之天子，及以月天，
聞是經故，精氣充實。是日天子，出閻浮提，
心生歡喜，放於無量，光明明網，遍照諸方；
即於出時，放大光網，開敷種種，諸池蓮華。
閻浮提內，無量果實，隨時成熟，飽諸眾生。
是時日月，所照殊勝；星宿正行，不失度數；
風雨隨時，豐實熾盛；多饒財寶，無所乏少。
是金光明，微妙經典，隨所流布，讀誦之處，
其國土境，即得增益，如上所說，無量功德。」

授記品第十四

爾時，如來將欲為是信相菩薩及其二子銀相、銀光，授阿耨多羅三藐三菩提記。是時即有十千天子，威德熾王而為上首，俱從忉利來至佛所，頂禮佛足, 卻坐一面。

爾時，佛告信相菩薩：「汝於來世，過無量無邊百千萬億不可稱計那由他劫，金照世界，當成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，號金寶蓋山王如來、應供．正遍知．明行足．善逝．世間解．無上士．調禦丈夫．天人師．佛．世尊。乃至是佛般涅槃後，正法像法皆滅盡已，長子銀相，當於是界次補佛處，世界爾時轉名淨幢，佛名閻浮檀金幢光照明如來、應供．正遍知．明行足．善逝．世間解．無上士．調禦丈夫．天人師．佛．世尊。乃至是佛般涅槃後，正法像法悉滅盡已，次子銀光復於是後次補佛處，世界名字如本不異，佛號曰金光照如來、應供．正遍知．明行足．善逝．世間解．無上士．調禦丈夫．天人師．佛．世尊。」

是十千天子，聞三大士得受記莂，復聞如是金光明經，聞已歡喜生殷重心，心無垢累如淨琉璃，清淨無礙猶如虛空。爾時，如來知是十千天子善根成熟，即便與授菩提道記：「汝等天子，於當來世，過阿僧祇百千萬億那由他劫，於是世界，當成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，同共一家、一姓、一名，號曰青目優鉢羅華香山如來、應供．正遍知．明行足．善逝．世間解．無上士．調禦丈夫．天人師．佛．世尊，如是次第出現於世，凡一萬佛。」

爾時，道場菩提樹神，名等增益，白佛言：「世尊！是十千天子，於忉利宮為聽法故故來集此，云何如來便與授記？世尊！我未曾聞是諸天子修行具足六波羅蜜，亦未曾聞捨於手、足、頭、目、髓、腦、

所愛妻子、財寶、穀帛、金銀、琉璃、硨磲、碼碯、真珠、珊瑚、珂貝、璧玉、甘饌飲食、衣服、臥具、病瘦醫藥、象馬車乘、殿堂、屋宅、園林、泉池、奴婢、僕使，如餘無量百千菩薩，以種種資生供養之具，恭敬供養過去無量百千萬億那由他等諸佛世尊。如是菩薩於未來世，亦捨無量所重之物，頭目髓腦、所愛妻子、財寶穀帛，乃至僕使，次第修行，成就具足六波羅蜜；成就是已備修苦行，動經無量無邊劫數，然後方得受菩提記。世尊！是天子等何因何緣，修行何等勝妙善根，從彼天來暫得聞法便得受記？惟願世尊，為我解說，斷我疑網。」

爾時，佛告樹神：「善女天！皆有因緣，有妙善根，以隨相修。何以故？以是天子於所住處捨五欲樂，故來聽是金光明經。既聞法已，於是經中淨心殷重，如說修行；復得聞此三大菩薩受於記莂，亦以過去本昔發心誓願因緣。是故我今皆與受記，於未來世，當成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。」

除病品第十五

佛告道場菩提樹神：「善女天！諦聽，諦聽！善持憶念，我當為汝演說往昔誓願因緣。過去無量不可思議阿僧祇劫，爾時，有佛出現於世，名曰寶勝如來、應供、正遍知、明行足、善逝、世間解、無上士、調禦丈夫、天人師、佛、世尊。善女天！爾時，是佛般涅槃後，正法滅已，於像法中，有王名曰天自在光王，修行正法，如法治世，人民和順，孝養父母。是王國中有一長者名曰持水，善知醫方救諸病苦，方便巧知四大增損。善女天！爾時，持水長者家中，後生一子名曰流水，體貌殊勝，端正第一，形色微妙，威德具足，受性聰敏，善解諸論，種種技藝、書疏、算計無不通達。是時國內天降疫病，有無量百千諸眾生等皆無免者，為諸苦惱之所逼切。

「善女天！爾時，流水長者子見是無量百千眾生受諸苦惱故，為是眾生生大悲心，作是思惟：『如是無量百千眾生受諸苦惱。我父長者，雖善醫方，能救諸苦，方便巧知四太增損，年已衰邁，老耄枯悴，皮緩面皺，羸瘦顫掉，行來往反要因幾杖，困頓疲乏不能至彼城邑聚落；而是無量百千眾生，復遇重病無能救者。我今當至大醫父所諮問治病醫方祕法：諮稟知已，當至城邑、聚落、村舍治諸眾生種種重病，悉令得脫無量諸苦。』

「時長者子思惟是已，即至父所，頭面著地，為父作禮，叉手卻住，以四大增損而問於父，即說偈言：

『云何當知，四大諸根，衰損代謝，而得諸病？

云何當知，飲食時節，若食食已，身火不滅？
云何當知，治風及熱，水過胀病，及以等分？
何時動風、何時動熱、何時動水，以害眾生？』

時父長者，即以偈頌，解說醫方，而答其子：
『三月是夏，三月是秋，三月是冬，三月是春，
是十二月，三三而說。從如是數，一歲四時；
若二二說，足滿六時。三三本攝，二二現時，
隨是時節　消息飲食，是能益身。醫方所說，
隨時歲中，諸根四大，代謝增損，令身得病。
有善醫師，隨順四時，三月將養，調和六大，
隨病飲食，及以湯藥。多風病者，夏則發動；
其熱病者，秋則發動；等分病者，冬則發動；
其肺病者，春則增劇。有風病者，夏則應服
肥膩醎酢，及以熱食；有熱病者，秋服冷甜，
等分冬服，甜酢肥膩；肺病春服，肥膩辛熱。
飽食然後，則發肺病；於食消時，則發熱病；
食消已後，則發風病。如是四大　隨三時發；
風病羸損，補以酥膩；熱病下藥，服訶梨勒；
等病應服，三種妙藥，所謂甜辛，及以酥膩；
肺病應服，隨能吐藥。若風熱病、肺病等分，
違時而發，應當任師，籌量隨病，飲食湯藥。』

「善女天！爾時，流水長者子問其父醫四大增損，因是得了一切醫方。時長者子知醫方已，遍至國內城邑聚落，在在處處隨有眾生病苦者所，軟言慰喻，作如是言：『我是醫師！我是醫師，善知方藥，今當為汝療治救濟，悉令除愈。』

「善女天！爾時，眾生聞長者子軟言慰喻，許為治病，心生歡喜，踴躍無量。時有百千無量眾生，遇極重病，得聞是言，心歡喜故，種種所患即得除差，平復如本，氣力充實。

「善女天！復有無量百千眾生，病苦深重，難除差者，即共來至長者子所。時長者子，即以妙藥授之令服，服已除差，亦得平復。

「善女天！是長者子，於其國內治諸眾生所有病苦悉得除差。」

金光明經卷第四

流水長者子品第十六

佛告樹神：「爾時，流水長者子，於天自在光王國內，治一切眾生無

量苦患已，令其身體平復如本，受諸快樂；以病除故，多設福業，修行佈施，尊重恭敬是長者子，作如是言：『善哉，長者！能大增長福德之事，能益眾生無量壽命，汝今真是大醫之王，善治眾生無量重病，必是菩薩善解方藥。』

「善女天！時長者子有妻，名曰水空龍藏，而生二子：一名水空，二名水藏。時長者子將是二子，次第遊行城邑聚落，最後到一大空澤中，見諸虎狼狐犬鳥獸，多食肉血，悉皆一向馳奔而去。時長者子作是念言：『是諸禽獸何因緣故一向馳走？我當隨後逐而觀之。』

「時長者子遂便隨逐，見有一池，其水枯涸，於其池中多有諸魚。時長者子見是魚已，生大悲心。時有樹神示現半身，作如是言：『善哉！善哉！大善男子！此魚可湣，汝可與水，是故號汝名為流水。復有二緣名為流水：一、能流水，二、能與水。汝今應當隨名定實。』時長者子問樹神言：『此魚頭數為有幾所？』樹神答言：『其數具足，足滿十千。』

「善女天！爾時，流水聞是數已，倍復增益生大悲心。善女天！時此空池為日所曝，唯少水在；是十千魚將入死門，四向宛轉，見是長者心生恃賴，隨是長者所至方面，隨逐瞻視，目未曾捨。是時長者馳趣四方，推求索水了不能得，便四顧望，見有大樹，尋取枝葉，還到池上與作陰涼。作陰涼已，復更推求，是池中水本從何來？即出四向周遍求覓，莫知水處。復更疾走遠至餘處，見一大河名曰水生。爾時，復有諸餘惡人，為捕此魚故，於上流懸險之處，決棄其水，不令下過。然其決處懸險難補，計當修治經九十日，百千人功猶不能成，況我一身！

「時長者子，速疾還反至大王所，頭面禮拜，卻住一面，合掌向王說其因緣，作如是言：『我為大王國土人民治種種病，漸漸遊行至彼空澤，見有一池，其水枯涸，有十千魚為日所曝，今日困厄將死不久。惟願大王，借二十大象，令得負水，濟彼魚命，如我與諸病人壽命。』爾時，大王即勅大臣，速疾供給。爾時，大臣奉王告勅，語是長者：『善哉，大士！汝今自可至象廄中隨意選取，利益眾生令得快樂。』

「是時流水及其二子，將二十大象，從治城人借索皮囊，疾至彼河上流決處盛水。象負馳疾奔還至空澤池。從象背上下其囊水，寫置池中，水遂彌滿，還復如本。時長者子，於池四邊彷徉而行，是魚爾時亦復隨逐循岸而行。時長者子，復作是念：『是魚何緣隨我而行？是魚必為飢火所惱，復欲從我求索飲食，我今當與。』

「善女天！爾時，流水長者子告其子言：『汝取一象最大力者，速至

家中啟父長者：「家中所有可食之物，乃至父母飲噉之分，及以妻子奴婢之分，一切聚集悉載象上，急速來還。」』爾時，二子如父教勅，乘最大象往至家中，白其祖父說如上事。

「爾時，二子收取家中可食之物，載象背上，疾還父所至空澤池。時長者子見其子還，心生歡喜，踴躍無量，從子邊取飲食之物，散著池中，與魚食已，即自思惟：『我今已能與此魚食，令其飽滿，未來之世，當施法食。』復更思惟：『曾聞過去空閑之處，有一比丘，讀誦大乘方等經典，其經中說，「若有眾生臨命終時，得聞寶勝如來名號即生天上。」我今當為是十千魚解說甚深十二因緣，亦當稱說寶勝佛名。』

「時閻浮提中有二種人：一者、深信大乘方等，二者、毀呰不生信樂。時長者子作是思惟：『我今當入池水之中，為是諸魚說深妙法。』思惟是已，即便入水作如是言：『南無過去寶勝如來、應供、正遍知、明行足、善逝、世間解、無上士、調御丈夫、天人師、佛、世尊。寶勝如來本往昔時行菩薩道，作是誓願：「若有眾生，於十方界臨命終時聞我名者，當令是輩即命終已，尋得上生三十三天。」』爾時，流水長者子復為是魚解說如是甚深妙法：所謂無明緣行、行緣識、識緣名色、名色緣六入、六入緣觸、觸緣受、受緣愛、愛緣取、取緣有、有緣生、生緣老、死、憂、悲、苦惱。

「善女天！爾時，流水長者子及其二子，說是法已即共還家。是長者子復於後時，賓客聚會醉酒而臥。爾時，其地卒大震動，時十千魚同日命終，既命終已生忉利天。既生天已作是思惟：『我等以何善業因緣，得生於此忉利天中？』復相謂言：『我等先於閻浮提內，墮畜生中，受於魚身，流水長者子與我等水及以食，復為我等解說甚深十二因緣，並稱寶勝如來名號，以是因緣令我等輩得生此天。是故，我等今當往至長者子所報恩供養。』

「爾時，十千天子從忉利天下閻浮提，至流水長者子大醫王家。時長者子在樓屋上露臥眠睡。是十千天子，以十千真珠天妙瓔珞置其頭邊，復以十千置其足邊，復以十千置右脇邊，復以十千置左脇邊；雨曼陀羅華、摩訶曼陀羅華，積至於膝；作種種天樂出妙音聲。閻浮提中，有睡眠者皆悉覺寤，流水長者子亦從睡寤。是十千天子，於上空中飛騰遊行，於天自在光王國內，處處皆雨天妙蓮華。是諸天子復至本處空澤池所復雨天華，便從此沒還忉利宮，隨意自在，受天五欲。

「時閻浮提過是夜已，天自在光王問諸大臣：『昨夜何緣示現如是淨妙瑞相，有大光明？』大臣答言：『大王當知，忉利諸天於流水長者子家，雨四十千真珠瓔珞，及不可計曼陀羅華。』王即告臣：『卿可

往至彼長者家，善言誘喻，喚令使來。』大臣受勅即至其家，宣王教令，喚是長者。

「是時長者尋至王所。王問長者：『何緣示現如是瑞相？』長者子言：『我必定知是十千魚其命已終。』時大王言：『今可遣人審實是事。』「爾時，流水尋遣其子至彼池所，看是諸魚死活定實。爾時，其子聞是語已，向於彼池；既至池已，見其池中多有摩訶曼陀羅華，積聚成積，其中諸魚悉皆命終。見已即還，白其父言：『彼諸魚等悉已命終。』爾時，流水知是事已，復至王所作如是言：『是十千魚悉皆命終。』王聞是已，心生歡喜。」

爾時，世尊告道場菩提樹神：「善女天！欲知爾時流水長者子，今我身是；長子水空，今羅睺羅是；次子水藏，今阿難是；時十千魚者，今十千天子是。是故我今為其授阿耨多羅三藐三菩提記。爾時，樹神現半身者，今汝身是。」

捨身品第十七

爾時，道場菩提樹神復白佛言：「世尊！我聞世尊過去修行菩薩道時，具受無量百千苦行，捐捨身命、肉、血、骨、髓；惟願世尊少說往昔苦行因緣，為利眾生受諸快樂。」

爾時，世尊即現神足。神足力故，令此大地六種震動，於大講堂眾會之中，有七寶塔從地湧出，眾寶羅網彌覆其上。爾時，大眾見是事已，生稀有心。爾時，世尊即從座起，禮拜是塔，恭敬圍繞，還就本座。

爾時，道場菩提樹神白佛言：「世尊！如來世雄出現於世，常為一切之所恭敬，於諸眾生最勝最尊。何因緣故禮拜是塔？」佛言：「善女天！我本修行菩薩道時，我身舍利安止是塔，因由是身令我早成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。」

爾時，佛告尊者阿難：「汝可開塔，取中舍利示此大眾。是舍利者，乃是無量六波羅蜜功德所熏。」

爾時，阿難聞佛教勅，即往塔所，禮拜供養開其塔戶，見其塔中有七寶函。以手開函，見其舍利色妙紅白，而白佛言：「世尊！是中舍利其色紅白。」

佛告阿難：「汝可持來，此是大士真身舍利。」爾時，阿難即舉寶函，還至佛所，持以上佛。爾時，佛告一切大眾：「汝等今可禮是舍利。此舍利者是戒定慧之所熏修，甚難可得最上福田。」爾時，大眾聞是語已，心懷歡喜，即從座起，合掌敬禮大士舍利。

爾時，世尊欲為大眾斷疑網故，說是舍利往昔因緣：「阿難！過去之世有王名曰摩訶羅陀，修行善法，善治國土，無有怨敵。時有三子，端正微妙，形色殊特，威德第一：第一大子名曰摩訶波那羅，次子名曰摩訶提婆，小子名曰摩訶薩埵。是三王子，於諸園林遊戲觀看，次第漸到一大竹林憩駕止息。第一王子作如是言：『我於今日心甚怖懅。於是林中將無衰損？』第二王子復作是言：『我於今日不自惜身，但離所愛心憂愁耳。』第三王子復作是言：『我於今日獨無怖懅，亦無愁惱，山中空寂，神仙所讚，是處閑靜，能令行人安隱受樂。』

「時諸王子說是語已，轉復前行。見有一虎，適產七日，而有七子圍繞周匝，飢餓窮悴，身體羸瘦，命將欲絕。第一王子見是虎已，作如是言：『怪哉！此虎產來七日，七子圍繞不得求食。若為飢逼，必還噉子。』第三王子言：『此虎經常所食何物？』第一王子言：『此虎唯食新熱肉血。』第三王子言：『君等誰能與此虎食？』第二王子言：『此虎飢餓，身體羸瘦，窮困頓乏，餘命無幾，不容餘處為其求食，設餘求者命必不濟。誰能為此不惜身命？』第一王子言：『一切難捨不過己身。』第二王子言：『我等今者以貪惜故，於此身命不能放捨；智慧薄少故，於是事而生驚怖。若諸大士欲利益他，生大悲心為眾生者，捨此身命不足為難。』時諸王子心大愁憂，久住視之，目未曾捨。作是觀已尋便離去。

「爾時，第三王子作是念言：『我今捨身時已到矣。何以故？我從昔來多棄是身都無所為，亦常愛護處之屋宅，又復供給衣服、飲食、臥具、醫藥、象馬車乘，隨時將養令無所乏；而不知恩，反生怨害？然復不免無常敗壞。復次，是身不堅，無所利益，可惡如賊，猶若行廁。我於今日，當使此身作無上業，於生死海中作大橋梁。復次，若捨此身，即捨無量癰疽瘭疾、百千怖畏。是身唯有大小便利；是身不堅，如水上沫；是身不淨，多諸蟲戶；是身可惡，肪纏血塗，皮骨、髓腦共相連持。如是觀察甚可患厭，是故我今應當捨離，以求寂滅，無上涅槃，永離憂患無常變異，生死休息。無諸塵累，無量禪定智慧功德，具足成就微妙法身，百福莊嚴，諸佛所讚。證成如是無上法身，與諸眾生無量法樂。』

「是時王子勇猛堪任，作是大願，以上大悲熏修其心；慮其二兄心懷怖懅，或恐固遮為作留難，即便語言：『兄等今者可與眷屬還其所止。』爾時，王子摩訶薩埵還至虎所，脫身衣裳置竹枝上，作是誓言：『我今為利諸眾生故，證於最勝無上道故，大悲不動、捨難捨故，為求菩提智所讚故，欲度三有諸眾生故，欲滅生死怖畏熱惱故。』是時王子作是誓已，即自放身，臥餓虎前；是時王子以大悲力故，虎無能為。王子復作如是念言：『虎今羸瘦，身無勢力，不能得我身

血肉食。』即起求刁，周遍求之了不能得，即以乾竹刺頸出血，於高山上投身虎前。

「是時大地六種震動，日無精光，如羅睺羅，阿修羅王捉持障蔽；又雨雜華、種種妙香。時虛空中有諸餘天，見是事已，心生歡喜，歎未曾有，讚言：『善哉！善哉！大士！汝今真是行大悲者，為眾生故能捨難捨，於諸學人第一勇健。汝已為得諸佛所讚，常樂住處，不久當證無惱無熱清涼涅槃。』

「是虎爾時見血流出汙王子身，即便舐血，噉食其肉，唯留餘骨。爾時，第一王子見地大動，為第二王子而說偈言：

『震動大地，及以大海；日無精光，如有覆蔽；
於上虛空，雨諸華香；必是我弟　捨所愛身。』

「第二王子復說偈言：

『彼虎產來，已經七日，七子圍繞，窮無飲食，
氣力羸損，命不云遠。小弟大悲，知其窮悴，
懼不堪忍，還食其子，恐定捨身，以救彼命。』

「時二王子心大愁怖，涕泣悲歎，容貌憔悴，復共相將還至虎所。見弟所著帔服、衣裳，皆悉在一竹枝之上；骸骨、髮爪布散狼藉，流血處處遍汙其地。見已悶絕，不自勝持，投身骨上。良久乃蘇，即起舉首號天而哭：『我弟幼稚！才能過人，特為父母之所愛念，奄忽捨身以飼餓虎？我今還宮，父母說問，當云何答？我寧在此併命一處，不忍見是骸骨、髮爪。何心捨離還見父母、妻子、眷屬、朋友、知識？』時二王子悲號懊惱，漸捨而去。

「時小王子所將侍從各散諸方，互相謂言：『今者我天為何所在？』爾時，王妃於睡眠中，夢乳被割，牙齒墮落，得三鴿雛一為鷹食。爾時王妃，大地動時即便驚寤，心生愁怖而說偈言：

『今日何故，　大地大水，　一切皆動；
物不安所，　日無精光，　如有覆蔽？
我心憂苦，　目瞤瞤動，　如我今者，
所見瑞相，　必有災異　　不祥苦惱。』

「於是王妃說是偈已，時有青衣在外已聞王子消息，心驚惶怖，尋即入內，啟白王妃作如是言：
『向者在外聞諸侍從推覓王子，不知所在。』

王妃聞已，生大憂惱，涕泣滿目至大王所：『我於向者傳聞外人，失我最小所愛之子。』大王聞已而復悶絕，悲哽苦惱，抆淚而言：『如

何今日失我心中所愛重者？』」

爾時，世尊欲重宣此義而說偈言：

「我於往昔，無量劫中，捨所重身，以求菩提。
若為國王，及作王子，常捨難捨，以求菩提。
我念宿命，有大國王，其王名曰，摩訶羅陀。
是王有子，能大佈施，其子名曰，摩訶薩埵。
復有二兄，長者名曰，大波那羅，次名大天。
三人同遊，至一空山，見新產虎，飢窮無食。
時勝大士，生大悲心：「我今當捨，所重之身，
此虎或為，飢餓所逼，儻能還食，自所生子。」
即上高山，自投虎前，為令虎子，得全性命。
是時大地，及諸大山，皆悉震動，驚諸蟲獸、
虎狼師子，四散馳走；世間皆闇，無有光明。
是時二兄，故在竹林，心懷憂惱，愁苦涕泣，
漸漸推求，遂至虎所。見虎虎子，血污其口；
又見骸骨，髮毛爪齒，處處迸血，狼藉在地。
時二王子，見是事已，心更悶絕，自躃於地，
以灰塵土，自塗坌身，忘失正念，生狂癡心。
所將侍從，覩見是事，亦生悲慟，失聲號哭，
互以冷水，共相噴灑，然後蘇息，而復得起。
是時王子，當捨身時，正值後宮，妃后婇女，
眷屬五百，共相娛樂。王妃是時，兩乳汁出，
一切肢節，痛如針刺，心生愁惱，似喪愛子。
於是王妃，疾至王所，其聲微細，悲泣而言：
『大王今當，諦聽諦聽，憂愁盛火，今來燒我；
我今二乳，俱時汁出，身體苦切，如被針刺。
我見如是，不祥瑞相，恐更不復，見所愛子；
今以身命，奉上大王，願速遣人，求覓我子。
夢三鴿雛，在我懷抱，其最小者，可適我心；
有鷹飛來，奪我而去；夢是事已，即生憂惱。
我今愁怖，恐命不濟，願速遣人，推求我子。』
是時王妃，說是語已，即時悶絕，而復躃地。
王聞是語，復生憂惱，以不得見，所愛子故。
其王大臣，及諸眷屬，悉皆聚集，在王左右，
哀哭悲號，聲動天地。爾時城內，所有人民，
聞是聲已，驚愕而出，各相謂言：
『今是王子，為活來耶？為已死亡？如是大士，
常出軟語，為眾所愛，今難可見。』

已有諸人，入林推求，不久自當，得定消息。
諸人爾時，憧惶如是，而復悲號，哀動神祇。
爾時大王，即從座起，以水灑妃，良久乃蘇。
還得正念，微聲問王：『我子今者，為死活耶？』

爾時王妃，念其子故，倍復懊惱，心無暫捨：
『可惜我子，形色端正；如何一旦，捨我終亡？
云何我身，不先薨沒，而見如是，諸苦惱事？
善子妙色，猶淨蓮華，誰壞汝身，使令分離？
將非是我，昔日怨讐，挾本業緣，而殺汝耶？
我子面目，淨如滿月，不圖一旦，遇斯禍對；
寧使我身，破碎如塵，不令我子，喪失身命。
我所見夢，已為得報，直我無情，能堪是苦？
如我所夢，牙齒墮落，二乳一時，汁自流出，
必定是我，失所愛子；夢三鴿雛，鷹奪一去，
三子之中，必定失一。』

爾時大王，即告其妃：
『我今當遣，大臣使者，周遍東西，推求覓子。
汝今且可　莫大憂愁。』

大王如是，慰喻妃已，即便嚴駕，出其宮殿。
心生愁惱，憂苦所切，雖在大眾，顏貌憔悴，
即出其城，覓所愛子。爾時亦有　無量諸人，
哀號動地，尋從王後。是時大王，既出城已，
四向顧望，求覓其子，煩惋心亂，靡知所在；
最後遙見，有一信來，頭蒙塵土，血污其衣，
灰糞塗身，悲號而至。爾時大王，摩訶羅陀，
見是使已，倍生懊惱，舉首號叫，仰天而哭。
先所遣臣，尋復來至，既至王所，作如是言：
『願王莫愁。諸子猶在，不久當至，令王得見。』

須臾之頃，復有臣來，見王愁苦，顏貌憔悴，
身所著衣，垢膩塵汙：
『大王當知，一子已終；二子雖存，哀悴無賴。
第三王子，見虎新產，飢窮七日，恐還食子；
見是虎已，深生悲心，發大誓願：「當度眾生，
於未來世，證成菩提。」即上高處，投身虎前。
虎飢所逼，便起噉食，一切血肉，已為都盡，
唯有骸骨，狼藉在地。』

是時大王，聞臣語已，轉復悶絕，失念躃地；

憂愁盛火，熾然其身。諸臣眷屬，亦復如是。
以水灑王，良久乃蘇，復起舉首，號天而哭。

復有臣來，而白王言：
『向於林中，見二王子，愁憂苦毒，悲號涕泣，
迷悶失志，自投於地。臣即求水，灑其身上，
良久之頃，乃還蘇息。望見四方，大火熾然。
扶持暫起，尋復躃地，舉首悲哀，號天而哭，
乍復讚歎，其弟功德。』

是時大王，以離愛子，其心迷悶，氣力憒然，
憂惱涕泣，並復思惟：
『是最小者，我所愛重；無常大鬼，奄便吞食。
其餘二子，今雖存在，而為憂火　之所焚燒，
或能為是，喪失命根？我宜速往　至彼林中，
迎載諸子，急還宮殿。其母在後，憂苦逼切，
心肝分裂，或能失命；若見二子，慰喻其心，
可使終保　餘年壽命。』

爾時大王，駕乘名象，與諸侍從，欲至彼林，
即於中路，見其二子，號天扣地，稱弟名字。
時王即前，抱持二子，悲號涕泣，隨路還宮。
速令二子，覲見其母。」

佛告樹神：

「汝今當知，爾時王子，摩訶薩埵，捨身飼虎，
今我身是；爾時大王，摩訶羅陀，於今父王，
輸頭檀是；爾時王妃，今摩耶是；第一王子，
今彌勒是；第二王子，今調達是；爾時虎者，
今瞿夷是；時虎七子，今五比丘，及舍利弗，
目犍連是。

爾時，大王摩訶羅陀及其妃后，悲號涕泣，悉皆脫身禦服瓔珞，與諸大眾往竹林中收其舍利，即於此處，起七寶塔。是時王子摩訶薩埵，臨捨命時，作是誓願：『願我舍利於未來世過算數劫，常為眾生而作佛事。』」

說是經時，無量阿僧祇諸天及人，發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心。「樹神！是名禮塔往昔因緣。」爾時，佛神力故，是七寶塔即沒不現。

讚佛品第十八

爾時，無量百千萬億諸菩薩眾，從此世界至金寶蓋山王如來國土。到彼土已，五體投地為佛作禮，卻住一面，合掌向佛，異口同音而讚歎曰：

「如來之身，金色微妙，其明照耀，如金山王；
身淨柔軟，如金蓮華；無量妙相，以自莊嚴；
隨形之好，光飾其體，淨絜無比，如紫金山；
圓足無垢，如淨滿月；其音清徹，妙如梵聲、
師子吼聲、大雷震聲，六種清淨　微妙音聲；
迦陵頻伽、孔雀之聲。清淨無垢，威德具足；
百福相好，莊嚴其身。光明遠照，無有齊限；
智慧寂滅，無諸愛習。世尊成就，無量功德，
譬如大海、須彌寶山。為諸眾生，生憐湣心，
於未來世，能與快樂。如來所說，第一深義，
能令眾生　寂滅安隱；能與眾生　無量快樂；
能演無上　甘露妙法；能開無上　甘露法門；
能入一切　無患窟宅；能令眾生　悉得解脫，
度於三有，無量苦海，安住正道，無諸憂苦。
如來世尊，功德智慧、大慈悲力、精進方便，
如是無量，不可稱計；我等今者，不能說有。
諸天世人　於無量劫，盡思度量，不能得知
如來所有　功德智慧　無量大海，一滴少分。
我今略讚　如來功德，百千億分，不能宣一。
若我功德，得聚集者，迴與眾生，證無上道。」

爾時，信相菩薩即於此會從座而起，偏袒右肩，右膝著地，合掌向佛而說讚言：

「世尊百福　相好微妙，功德千數，莊嚴其身；
色淨遠照，視之無厭；如日千光，彌滿虛空，
光明熾盛，無量無邊；猶如無數，珍寶大聚，
其明五色，青紅赤白，琉璃頗梨，如融真金。
光明赫奕，通徹諸山，悉能遠照，無量佛土；
能滅眾生，無量苦惱，又與眾生，上妙快樂。
諸根清淨，微妙第一，眾生見者，無有厭足。
髮紺柔軟，猶孔雀項，如諸蜂王，集在蓮華。
清淨大悲　功德莊嚴，無量三昧，及以大慈，
如是功德，悉以聚集。相好妙色，嚴飾其身，
種種功德，助成菩提。如來悉能，調伏眾生，
令心柔軟，受諸快樂。種種深妙　功德莊嚴，

亦為十方，諸佛所讚。其光遠照，遍於諸方，
猶如日月，充滿虛空；功德成就，如須彌山，
在在示現　於諸世界。齒白齊密，猶如珂雪；
其德如日，處空明顯；眉間毫相，右旋宛轉，
光明流出，如琉璃珠，其色微妙，如日處空。」

爾時，道場菩提樹神復說讚曰：

「南無清淨　無上正覺。甚深妙法，隨順覺了，
遠離一切　非法非道，獨拔而出，成佛正覺。
知有非有，本性清淨；稀有稀有，如來功德；
稀有稀有，如來大海；稀有稀有，如須彌山；
稀有稀有，佛無邊行；稀有稀有，佛出於世，
如優曇華，時一現耳；稀有如來，無量大悲，
釋迦牟尼，為人中日。為欲利益　諸眾生故，
宣說如是　妙寶經典。善哉如來，諸根寂滅，
而復遊入　善寂大城，無垢清淨　甚深三昧，
入於諸佛　所行之處。一切聲聞，身皆空寂；
兩足世尊，行處亦空。如是一切，無量諸法，
推本性相，亦皆空寂。一切眾生，性相亦空，
狂愚心故，不能覺知。我常念佛，樂見世尊，
常作誓願，不離佛日。我常於地　長跪合掌，
其心戀慕，欲見於佛；我常修行，最上大悲，
哀泣雨淚，欲見於佛；我常渴仰，欲見於佛，
為是事故，憂火熾然。惟願世尊，賜我慈悲，
清冷法水，以滅是火。世尊慈湣，悲心無量，
願賜我身　常得見佛。世尊常護，一切人天，
是故我今，渴仰欲見。聲聞之身，猶如虛空、
焰幻響化，如水中月；眾生之性，如夢所見。
如來行處，淨如琉璃，入於無上，甘露法處，
能與眾生　無量快樂。如來行處，微妙甚深，
一切眾生，無能知者；五通神仙，及諸聲聞，
一切緣覺，亦不能知。我今不疑　佛所行處，
惟願慈悲，為我現身。」

爾時，世尊從三昧起，以微妙音而讚歎言：「善哉！善哉！樹神善女！汝於今日快說是言，一切眾生若聞此法，皆入甘露無生法門。」

囑累品第十九

爾時，釋迦牟尼佛從三昧起現大神力，以右手摩諸菩薩摩訶薩頂，

與諸天王及諸龍王、二十八部散脂鬼神大將軍等，而作是言：「我於無量百千萬億恒河沙劫，修習是金光明微妙經典，汝等當受持讀誦廣宣此法，復於閻浮提內無令斷絕。若有善男子、善女人，於未來世中有受持讀誦此經典者，汝等諸天常當擁護，當知是人於未來世無量百千，人天之中常受快樂，於未來世值遇諸佛，疾得證成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。」

爾時，諸大菩薩，及天龍王二十八部散脂大將等，即從座起到於佛前，五體投地俱發聲言：「如世尊勅，當具奉行。」如是三白：「如世尊勅，當具奉行。」於是散脂大將等，而白佛言：「如世尊勅，若未來世中有受持是經，若自書若使人書，我當與此二十八部諸鬼神等，常當隨侍擁護隱蔽其身，是說法者皆悉消滅諸惡令得安隱，願不有慮。」

爾時，釋迦牟尼佛現大神力，十方無量世界悉皆六種震動，是時諸佛皆大歡喜，囑累是經故。讚美持法者，現無量神力。於是無量無邊阿僧祇菩薩摩訶薩大眾及信相菩薩，金光、金藏、常悲、法上等，及四天大王、十千天子，與道場菩提樹神、堅牢地神及一切世間天人阿脩羅等，聞佛所說，皆發無上菩提之道，踴躍歡喜作禮而去。

Appendix I: Merits of Virtues of the Buddha and Mahā-bodhisattvas

The distinctively unique characteristics of a Buddha compared to the Śrāvakas, consist of:

- The ten mental powers
- The four distinctive fearlessness
- The exclusive eighteen fulfilled virtues

I. Ten Powers of the Buddha (*daśa-tathāgatabalāni*)

Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra (瑜伽師地論), Taishō Tripiṭaka, No. 1579 [*cf*. Nos. 1580-1584], scroll 49,[0569a04] outlines the ten supreme mental powers of the Buddha [佛十力], which have the powers of the complete knowledge of:

(1) understanding truly and exactly why and how causes are causes, absence of cause is absence of cause, true is true, untrue is untrue, possible is possible, impossible is impossible, with respects to causes and their effects in the three timeframes. (*sthānāsthānaj-ñānabala*) [處非處智力]

(2) understanding truly as they are, the relations of causes and their respective karmic resultants as a result of beings' actions undertaken in the past, present, and future, knowing precisely their reasons, time and places where karmic resultants will come to maturity. (*karmavipāka-jñānabala*) [自業智力]

(3) understanding truly as they are, the different multiplicities of actions and practices performed by beings, the kinds of causes that would lead them to any one of the six different worlds of existence after the present life. This is the knowledge gained during the Buddha's meditative absorption. (*dhyāna-vimokṣa-samādhi-samāpatti-jñānabala*) [靜慮解脫等持等至智力]

(4) understanding truly as they are, beings' aggregates, their sense-base and elements, their levels of physical and mental faculties, their relative intellectual capacities, and the extent and best possible results of their abilities. (*indriyaparāpara-jñānabala*) [根勝劣智力]

(5) understanding truly as they are, the different moral and immoral inclinations of beings, their desires, states of mind, dispositions, deportments, thoughts and emotions. (*nānādhimukti-jñānabala*) [種種勝解智力]

(6) understanding as they really are, the improvement and deterioration, the maturity and immaturity of the faculties of beings. The Buddha understand exactly the actual development and progress of every each being. (*nānādhātu-jñānabala*) [種種界智力]

(7) understanding as they actually are, the defiling factors, purifying factors, and entire development process in regard to dhyānas; the release, concentration, attainment, as well as exiting from the dhyānas. The Buddha understands fully the causes of the deficiencies and efficiencies in the meditational phases leading to and emerging from dhyānas. (*sarvatragāminīpratipad-jñānabala*) [遍趣行智力]. [大智度論,俱舍論,菩薩地持經,雜阿含經稱作知一切至處道智力]

(8) recollecting not one previous birth but hundreds of thousands of his past births, and many aeons of the past existences of himself along with every detail of them. In similar capacity, the Buddha also knows fully the transmigratory causes and details of all sentient beings across the many worlds in the past many aeons. (*pūrvanivāsa-jñānabala*) [宿住隨念智力] [亦稱知宿命無漏智力]

(9) understanding unobstructedly with his purified divine eye, the past deaths and rebirths of all beings. The Buddha sees how beings passed away and were reborn in the different realms according to their own past actions, as normal and deficient, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate. (*cyutyupapatti-jñānabala*) [死生智力] [亦稱知天眼無礙智力]

(10) the methods for the permanent extermination of all faulty passions and mental defilements without a remainder. (*āsravaksaya-jñānabala*) [漏盡智力] [亦稱知永斷習氣智力]

In the Pāli canon, it is explained in MN 12: Sīhanāda Vagga; AN 10: Mahāvagga, Sīhanādasutta and Adhivuttipadasutta; Vibhaṅga 16: Ñāṇavibhaṅgo.

II. Fourfold Distinctive Fearlessness of the Buddha (*catvāri-vaiśāradyāni*)

The four kinds of fearlessness, refer to the perfect self-assurance of the Buddha (佛四無所畏), pertaining to :

1. proclaiming his knowledge of the perfect supreme Awakening with regard to phenomena (*abhisambodhi-vaiśāradya*) [正等覺無所畏];
2. proclaiming his knowledge of the complete destruction of all defilements (*asravakṣaya-vaiśāradya*) [漏永盡無所畏];
3. expounding the identified impediments to liberation (*antarāyikadharma-vaiśāradya*) [說障法無所畏];
4. expounding the right path that leads to emancipation (*nairyāṇikapratipad-vaiśāradya*) [說出道無所畏].

《阿毘達磨俱舍論》Abhidharmakośa-bhāsya, Taishō Tripiṭaka, scroll 27,[0140c17].
《大智度論》Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra, Taishō Tripiṭaka, scroll 48,[0407a28],[0407b04],[0407b10],[0407b15].

III. Eighteen Exclusive Merits fulfilled by the Buddha (*aṣṭādaśāveṇika-buddha-dharma*)

The eighteen distinctive merits fulfilled by the Buddha [佛十八不共法] according to the Prakaranāryavāca-śāstra (顯揚聖教論), Taishō Tripiṭaka, Vol. 31,[0499c02] are as follows:

The six kinds of faultlessness-fulfillment

1. un-mistakenness by bodily action [如來無誤失業]
2. un-mistakenness by speech [無卒暴音]
3. un-mistakenness by thought [無忘失念]
4. the absence of mental distractedness [無不定心]
5. mind of impartiality towards all beings [無種種想]
6. complete self-forsaking [無不擇已捨]

The six kinds of relentlessness-fulfillment

7. unceasing aspiration for the salvation of all [欲無退]
8. unrelenting right striving [正勤無退]
9. unflagging mindfulness [念無退]
10. un-attenuating concentration [等持無退]
11. un-abating wisdom [慧無退]
12. un-abating intellection for deliverance [解脫智見無退]

Unhindered Knowledge of the three spatio-temporal periods

13. unhindered knowledge of the past lives
    [於過去世無著無礙智]
14. unhindered knowledge of the future lives
    [於未來世無著無礙智]
15. unhindered knowledge of the present life
    [於現在無著無礙智]

Actions in accord with Knowledge

16. all bodily actions are led in accord with knowledge
    [如來一切身業智為導首隨智而行]
17. all verbal actions are led in accord with knowledge
    [如來一切語業智為導首隨智而行]
18. all mental actions are led in accord with knowledge
    [如來一切意業智為導首隨智而行]

The same eighteen of them are also enumerated in the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra (大智度論), scroll 26,[0247b11]. The same are also mentioned in the Vimuttimagga (The Path of Freedom) by Arhat Upatissa of the Tāmraśāṭīya school of Ceylon, but nonetheless with some variations from the above-stated.

IV. The Six Kinds of Superknowledge of the Buddha (*ṣaḍ-abhijñā*)

The first five are products of knowledge acquired in respect to purification and liberation of mind by transcending the base of neither-perception-nor-nonperception. The sixth supernatural power is acquired only by complete destruction of all defilements. These six supernatural powers possessed by a buddha (六神通) are also known as the six kinds of unimpededness. The second, fifth and sixth psychical power are also known as the three kinds of transcendental wisdom.

(1) the power of unimpeded bodily action in anywhere, anytime, including the ability to multiply oneself and becoming one again, appear and vanish at will, and so forth (*ṛddhividhi-abhijñā* or *ṛddhividhābhijñā*) (身如意通，或神足通).

(2) the power of divine vision, with which He can observe the full passages of birth and death, including happiness and misery of all the sentient beings born through the six destines. (*divyacakṣu-abhijñā* or *cyutyupapāda-abhijñā*) (天眼通)

(3) the power of divine hearing, with which He can hear all the expressions of suffering and joy experienced by sentient beings in the six realms of existence. (*divyaśrotra-abhijñā*) (天耳通)

(4) the power of knowing the thoughts of all beings in the six realms of existence. (*paracitta-abhijñā*) (他心通)

(5) the power of knowing the many previous lifetimes and all the experiences in those previous existences of all sentient beings, as well as the knowledge about the many past transitional cycles of the world. (*pūrvanivāsānusmṛti-abhijñā*) (宿命通)

(6) the knowledge power in regard to extinction of contaminations of the mind, whereby He can completely extirpate all worldly afflictions and free from the systemic round of birth and death. (*āśravakṣaya-abhijñā*) (漏盡通)

The three psychical powers of *divyacakṣu-abhijñā, pūrvanivāsānusmṛti-abhijñā*, and *āśravakṣaya-abhijñā* (above items 1, 5, 6) constitute the three brilliant higher knowledge or insights, in Sanskrit term as *trividyā* (三明)

V. The Eight Ways of Emancipation (*aṣṭa-vimokṣa*)

These eight ways of emancipations (*aṣṭa-vimokṣa*) (八解脫), represent an expedient method and preparatory stages of meditation, can vary according to the different texts in which they are mentioned. The list shown below is enumeration according to the Mahā-parinirvāṇa sūtra《大般涅槃經》卷上, No. 7 [No. 1(2), Nos. 5, 6] [0192a06].

(1) Release by contemplating on the external object while having an perception of the internal object. (內有色想外觀色解脫). It leads to the fine-material first *dhyāna*

(2) Release by contemplating on the external objects while having no perception of the internal object. (內無色想外觀色不淨思惟解脫). It leads to the fine-material second dhyāna, third *dhyāna*.

(3) Release by contemplating on the purity, radiance, and wondrousness of form, free from all afflictions and defilements. (淨解脫). It leads to the fine-material fourth *dhyāna*.

(4) Release by contemplating on the base of the inifinity of space. (空無邊處解脫)

(5) Release by contemplating on the base of the inifinity of consciousness. (識無邊處解脫)

(6) Release by contemplating on the base of the inifinity of nothingness. (無所有處解脫)

(7) Release by contemplating on the base of the inifinity of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. (非想非非想處解脫)

(8) Release by the attainment of cessation (滅盡定解脫). It brings about the stoppage of one's feeling and perception, of one's mind and their associated mental factors, and the purification of one's controlling faculties.

VI. The Eight Wonderful Applications (Lit. The Eight Bases of Subjection) (*aṣṭāv-abhibhvāyatanāni*)

The following enumerated the Eight Bases of Subjection (or Overcoming) (*aṣṭāvabhibhvāyatanāni*) (八勝處) as an expedient and preparatory method in meditation for overcoming attachment to the world of senses and desires according to the Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-śāstra 《大智度論》scroll 21, [0216a03] to [0216a08], and the Mahā-parinirvāṇa sūtra《大般涅槃經》卷上, No. 7 [No. 1(2), Nos. 5, 6] [0192a06].

1. Observing fewness of outer forms while having an inner appearance of form, in fine-material *dhyāna*.
(內有色相,外觀色少)

2. Observing abundance of outer forms while having no inner appearance of form, in fine-material *dhyāna*.
(內有色相,外觀色多)

3. Observing fewness of outer forms while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色少)

4. Observing abundance of outer forms while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色多)

5. Observing colours of all outer forms as green while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色青)

6. Observing colours of all outer forms as yellow while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色黃)

7. Observing colours of all outer forms as red while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色赤)

8. Observing colours of all outer forms as white while having no inner appearance of form, in immaterial *dhyāna*.
(內無色相,外觀色白)

VII. The Ten Applications of All-Pervasiveness (*daśa-kṛtsnāyatanāni*)

These ten modes of application in meditation is another expedient means of pervading objects in all directions uniformly (*daśa-kṛtsnāyatanāni*) (十遍處, 或稱十種一切處). The following is enumerated as shown in the Mahāvibhāṣā-śastra《大毘婆沙論》No. 1545, scroll 85,[0440b11].

1. Pervading everywhere with green colour, in fourth *dhyāna*. (青遍處)
2. Pervading everywhere with yellow colour, in fourth *dhyāna*. (黃遍處)
3. Pervading everywhere with red colour, in fourth *dhyāna*. (赤遍處)
4. Pervading everywhere with white colour, in fourth *dhyāna*. (白遍處)
5. Pervading everywhere with the earth-element, in fourth *dhyāna*. (地遍處)
6. Pervading everywhere with the liquid-element, in fourth *dhyāna*. (水遍處)
7. Pervading everywhere with the fire-element, in fourth *dhyāna*. (火遍處)
8. Pervading everywhere with the wind-element, in fourth *dhyāna*. (風遍處)
9. Pervading everywhere with the infinity of space, in fourth *dhyāna*. (空無邊處遍)
10. Pervading everywhere with the infinity of consciousness, in fourth *dhyāna*. (識無邊處遍)

VIII. The Four Kinds of Unhindered Reasoning (*catvāri pratisaṃvid*)

The four unhindered capabilities of analytical interpretation of the Bodhisattvas (*catvāri pratisaṃvid*) (四無礙解) with regard to following:

(1) doctrinal principles (and the alternative terms thereof) (*dharma-pratisaṃvid*) (法無礙解)
(2) real meanings (illustrative of all those different characters) (*artha-pratisaṃvid*) (義無礙解)
(3) explication by languages (expressed in different forms of wordings) (*nirukti-pratisaṃvid*) (訓詞無礙解)
(4) eloquence (in conducting teaching of all scriptural types) (*pratibhāna-pratisaṃvid*) (辯才無礙解)

IX. Four States of the Immeasurable (*catvāri-apramāṇāni*)

The four immeasurables (*catvāri apramāṇāni*) (四無量心) which are also called the four practices of nobility (四梵行), consist of:

(1) boundless kindness in bestowing comfort and happiness to sentient beings who are bereft of them (maitrī) (慈無量)
(2) boundless compassion in emancipating sentient beings from their suffering (karuṇā) (悲無量)
(3) boundless altruistic joy in seeing sentient beings salvaged from their states of suffering (muditā) (喜無量)
(4) boundless equanimity in rising above these sensations, treating all sentient beings with impartiality, aspiring them to practise the same (*upekṣā*) (捨無量)

X. Twenty-One Sublimities of the Buddha

His purest form of Awakening which is:	The Merits of Virtues is :
without duality in all manifestations of mental thoughts. (1) 不二現行	the arising of all that is known, is forever without any hindrances.
disposed toward state of objectlessness. (2) 趣無相法	the competence in the realisation of most excellent, purest true thusness in regard to the themes of being, un-being, and its non-duality.
dwelling in abode of the Buddhas. (3) 住於佛住	the mind remaining fixed in unremittingly in carrying out deeds of Tathāgata with any deliberate efforts.
realised the nature of equality of all Buddhas. (4) 逮得一切佛平等性	non-discrimination in the joyful intent toward the performance of deeds supported by dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.
free from all obstructions. (5) 到無障處	the practising of all the curative ways and methods that triumph over all hindrances.
a state of unshakenness. (6) 不可轉法	come from intelligently subduing all baseless refutations of the heretics (in opposition of Buddha's right teachings and testimony of attainment).

unimpeded in all his actions. (7) 所行無礙	appearing in this mundane world (from his inconceivable paradise) but who, in spite of which, is not impeded in all situations of secular conventions.
His inconceivable establishment of doctrines. (8) 其所安立不可思議	formulating and defining the right teachings (as in the twelve collections of scriptures).
the capability of traversing the three periods of past, present, and future, symbolising their equality as the nature of reality. (9) 遊於三世平等法性	the attained competency in foretelling events of past, present, and future periods.
the bodies which spread freely across all those worlds. (10) 其身流布一切世界	the Tathāgata's reward bodies (saṃbhogakāya) and transformed bodies (nirmāṇakāya) that appears in the world-systems.
without confusion in his knowledge in regard to anything. (11) 於一切法智無疑滯	the absolute elimination of the delusion of all kinds.
guiding and assisting beings with the various ways of cultivation as he saw fit, to strive toward the attainment of great Awakening. (12) 於一切行成就大覺	the capability of guiding and carrying all beings through with the various sorts of cultivation.
the wisdom which is without doubt concerning all those states. (13) 於諸法智無有疑惑	the wonderful knowledge about beings whom he guides, knowing when their excellent states will arise and their attainment be fulfilled in even the far future periods.
seen in whatever forms he had manifested which were indiscernible. (14) 凡所現身不可分別	his manifestations in different multitudinous form, adapted to guide in accordance with the excellent understanding of the innumerable kinds of beings.
the knowledge which is the most sought-after by all bodhisattvas. (15) 一切菩薩等所求智	his wisdom on which all Bodhisattvas and sages depend and aspire to tame and orientate sentient beings with step-up efforts in cultivation.

attained the non-duality of Buddha-hood, by virtue of which he dwells in the most excellent place ashore. (16) 得佛無二住勝彼岸	a dharmakāya of equality, completed by perfection of the practice of pāramitā.
the ultimate wondrous wisdom of liberation of a Tathågata, without in between any confusing irregularities. (17) 不相間雜如來解脫妙智究竟	showing the dissimilar encouraging features in the paradise of the Buddha in accordance with the levels of comprehensive accomplishment of the inhabitants and other beings.
the nature of equality that characterises the stage of Buddha-hood, with realisation of detachment from the antithetical extremes and middleness. (18) 證無中邊佛地平等	in regard to residential domains of the three types of bodies of the Buddha (*dharmakāya*, *saṃbhogakāya*, *nirmāṇakāya*), between which are without any sorts of delimitation.
exhausting all efforts to the limit of the dharma-realm. (19) 極於法界	frequent appearances in various forms in universal salvation for the benefits and blissfulness of all sentient beings, until exhaustion of all their rounds of birth and death to its bound.
deeds of the Buddha continue to the end of cosmic space, (20) 盡虛空性	coming from the endless work of universal salvation of the Buddha.
to the endless future of time. (21) 窮未來際	(the ultimate wisdom)

XI. The Thirty-two Major Marks of a Buddha (*dvātriṃśan mahā-puruṣa-lakṣaṇāni*)

The thirty-two physical marks of a Buddha (*dvātriṃśan mahā-puruṣa-lakṣaṇāni*) (三十二大士相) :

1. feet with level soles (*supratiṣṭhita-pāda*)
2. thousand-spoke wheel-sign on palms and soles (*cakrāṅkita-hasta-pāda-tala*)
3. long, slender fingers (*dīrghāṅguli*)
4. projecting heels (*āyata-pāda-pārṣṇi*)
5. fine web-like (reticulated) toes and fingers (*jālāvanaddha-hasta-pāda*)
6. soft and tender hands and feet (*mṛdu-taruṇa-hasta-pāda-tala*)
7. high-raised insteps (*ucchaṅkha-pāda*)

8. legs like those of a royal stag (*aiṇeya-jaṅgha*)
9. palms that reach down to knees when standing upright (*sthitānavanata-pralamba-bāhutā*)
10. well-retracted genitals (*kośopagata-vasti-guhya*)
11. extremely long arms (*nyagrodha-parimaṇḍala*)
12. body-hairs are bluish-black, and curl at the end to the right (*ūrdhvaṃga-roma)*
13. separate body-hairs, each grows from a single pore (*ekaika-roma-pradakṣiṇāvarta*)
14. golden-hued sheen of complexion (*suvarṇa-varṇa*)
15. a ten-foot halo around him.
16. skin so soft and smooth that no dust can adhere to it (*sūkṣma-suvarṇa-cchavi*)
17. seven convexities of the flesh—four behind his limbs, two behind his shoulders and one behind his trunk (*sapta-utsada*)
18. area below the armpits are well-filled (*citāntarāṃsa*)
19. front part of the body that is like a lion's (*siṃha-pūrvārdha kāya*)
20. an erect, beautifully upright body (*ṛjugātratā*)
21. full shoulders with the furrows filled in (*susaṃvṛta-skandha*)
22. fourty teeth (*catvāriṃśad-danta*)
23. teeth are even—with no gaps in between (*sama-danta*)
24. the four incisors are pure white (*suśukla-danta*)
25. full cheeks like those of a lion (*siṃha-hanu*)
26. a perfect sense of smell and taste of all food (*rasa-rasāgratā*)
27. a long, broad tongue (*prabhūta-tanu-jihva*)
28. a divine-like voice that has depth and resonance (*brahma-svara*)
29. deep purplish eyes, beautiful like sapphire gems (*abhinīla-netra*)
30. eye lashes like a royal bull (*go-pakṣmā*)
31. white urna [131] curl that emits light between the eyebrows (*ūrṇā-keśa*)
32. an usnisa or cranial protuberance on the crown of head (*uṣṇīṣa-śiraskatā*)

[131] An Urna is a concave circular dot—an auspicious mark manifested by a whorl of white hair on the forehead between the eyebrows.

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